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THE

# WORKS

OF THE

# REV. P. DODDRIDGE, D. D.

## *IN TEN VOLUMES.*

VOLUME III.

*CONTAINING,*

I. Sermons on public occasions.
II. Ordination sermons.
III. Funeral sermons.
IV. Hymns.

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# SERMONS

ON

# PUBLIC OCCASIONS.

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PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

TO THOSE

# INHABITANTS OF WELLINGBOROUGH,

*At whose Request this Sermon is published.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

THE composition of laboured and polished discourses on occasions of solemn humiliation before God, seems to me to have an absurdity yet greater than an exact elegance of dress at the funeral of a friend. When therefore I appeared among you, on your late fast day, I was solicitous about little other preparation, than what arose from a view of human nature, a deep feeling of the several circumstances of your affliction, and a serious concern to deliver what might be approved of God, as suited to the great purpose of your assembling, and subservient to your edification by the awful providence which occasioned it.

With these sentiments I spoke to you out of the fulness of my heart, and the countenances of many of you testified, that you heard me in the fulness of yours. When you surprised me with your unexpected request, that the sermon might be printed (which some of my reverend brethren that heard it had before intimated as their desire,) I knew not how to deny you, though I had excused myself to them; lest I should seem wanting in a due concern to keep alive upon your minds any good impressions which might have been made by it: and on farther consideration I was the more willing to comply, as such melancholy accidents (though blessed be God, not in an equal degree) frequently happen, especially in populous cities, and I do not recollect many single sermons which so directly lead to the religious improvement of them. I therefore set myself, as well as I could, to recollect what I had said, and have endeavoured to preserve the same freedom in writing which I used in speaking. I have laboured, as much as possible, to write from the life. The ruins of your town, the distress of your families, and the mixture of hope and fear attending the present situation of your affairs, have been as it were before my eyes, and on my heart in almost every sentence: and I have frequently intermingled these meditations with earnest prayers to God, that he so would lead me into the secret recesses of your souls, that what you before heard, and will now read, may be *like a nail fastened in a sure place*.

The trouble of writing this discourse in short-hand, and afterwards correcting the transcript, is so little a matter as hardly to deserve your thanks. Would my other engagements have allowed of more, I should have submitted to it with pleasure. I only beg that you, and others in your circumstances,

into whose hands it may fall, will read it attentively, and that each of you will consider what conscience hath to say to the plain admonitions it contains; and if you feel your hearts warmed anew, endeavour immediately to improve those good affections, that they may produce holy resolutions, and yield the peaceable and substantial fruits of righteousness; that it may appear you have not *suffered so many things in vain.*

These are my most hearty prayers for you. I hope you will in return excuse the defects of a sermon, which might have been more accurate, had it been less sincere; and will also pray, that I may be animated and cheered under the various and almost incessant labours, to which providence calls me, by seeing the world around me growing the wiser and better by them, and may finally be accepted of him, whom it is my highest ambition to serve and please: for whose sake I am

*Your very affectionate friend,*

*and faithful humble servant,*

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, Dec.* 30, 1731.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# SERMONS.

## SERMON I.

### ON A FIRE AT WELLINGBOROUGH.

Amos iv. 11.——*I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a Firebrand pluckcd out of the Burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*

WE are assembled this day, (I hope many of us with sensible and penitent hearts,) to lament *The burning which the Lord hath kindled* *. You have wisely set apart this portion of time as a season of solemn fasting and prayer, that you may *Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand* †, as those that hope he will exalt you in due time. But what is that humiliation which he requires, and will accept? Is it merely for a few hours *To bow down* your *heads* like *a bulrush* ‡? Is it merely to give us your bodily presence in this place of worship, and hear the words that are spoken in God's name to you, or in yours to him? Nay, I will add, is it merely to feel some transient emotions of the mind, in the reflection of a providence, which has left behind it such deep memorials, as nature itself may teach those to retain, whom grace doth not teach to improve them? Sirs, if your assembling this day be indeed a rational and a religious action, you come to enquire wherefore it is that God hath *Called to contend by fire*, as Amos expresses it §: you come that the voice of the rod may be more distinctly explained, in the name of him *Who* has *appointed it* ‖, and, in one word, agreeable to the language of my text, that you may be engaged to return to the Lord that smiteth you.

I could wish you had among you such an interpreter, as might be *One among a thousand, to declare* to you *his righteousness* ¶, and his will, in such a manner as might most effectually lead you to comport with it. But since the office of addressing you on this occasion is devolved upon me, I shall

* Lev. x. 6. † 1 Pet. v. 6. ‡ Isai. lviii. 5.
§ Amos vii. 4. ‖ Micah vi. 9. ¶ Job xxxiii. 23.

endeavour to shew that you have at least consigned it to one who is tenderly concerned for you, and therefore will not, and indeed cannot have the heart to amuse you with a studied form of words; but will endeavour, in the plainest and most faithful manner, to advance some important instructions and useful reflections, suited to the sad occasion that calls us together. And though some of those hints, like the providence that introduced them, may seem *Not to be joyous, but grievous* *, I hope they may afterwards *yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.*

It is a great instance both of the wisdom and goodness of God, that he has chosen to teach us, not only by precept, but example; in which respect it may properly be said, as well as in the other, that *He has set before* us *life and death* §. The *Hearts* of men in all ages are *fashioned*, in a great measure *alike* ‖; and from observing the temper and conduct of the Israelites in particular, in those various and remarkable circumstances, in which they are represented, we may learn more of the corruption of our nature, and draw more obvious lessons of religious instruction, than perhaps from the history of any other nation whatsoever. One can hardly imagine a circumstance, either of prosperity or distress, to which there is not something in their case, which has an apparent correspondence; and it is evidently so in particular, with reference to the event spoken of in the words of my text. God had been exercising them with a variety of judgments, and at length, as that was one of the greatest, he gives a commission to the devouring flames to break out, and spread ruin and desolation in their dreadful march. Thus far their condition and yours agree; and would to God, that it might rest there, and that with respect to you, who are *as brands plucked out of the burning*, there might be no room to add, *yet have ye not returned unto me.*

In handling the words, I shall,

First, Consider their contents; and,

Secondly, attempt the practical improvement of them, with a proper regard to your present circumstances. Yet affecting as they are, and suitable as the tenor of the discourse may be, I am sensible it entirely depends on the divine blessing and grace, to make it successful; to that therefore I humbly recommend what I am about to say, and entreat you to lift up your hearts to God, that he may give you the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and the understanding heart.

* Heb. xii. 11. † Deut. xxx. 15. ‡ Psal. xxxiii. 15.

I. I shall first, as plainly and briefly as I can, consider the original meaning and contents of these words, *I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord:* In which words you will naturally observe,

1. They are reminded, that it was the hand of God, which had lately kindled a fire among them.

*I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.* I doubt not but these words are to be understood, in a proper and literal sense, of fire, and of fire kindled in the common methods of divine providence.

They are to be understood of fire properly so called. It is true, sometimes any of God's judgments are compared to *Fire**, that being, as you too well know, a most dreadful and irresistible calamity, when it breaks out among the dwellings and possessions of men. Thus does the wrath of God, whenever it is kindled, rage and flame. Thus does it bear down all before it, and turn the most pleasant objects into heaps of ruin, desolation, and horror. But here, I apprehend, it is to be taken for proper fire, because it stands distinguished from several other kinds of judgments, ver. 7, & seq. from *drought, blasting, and mildew*, from *the palmerworm*, and *the pestilence;* and it is very remarkable, that it brings up the rear, as one of the most terrible of all.

I scruple not to add, that Amos speaks of fire kindled by the common method of divine providence. It is indeed said, he overthrew them, *as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah*, which, you know, was by fire and brimstone, rained down upon them in a miraculous manner; but there is no reason to take the words thus strictly, or to suppose that such a terrible tempest of fire and brimstone had actually fallen upon the cities of Israel. That had been an event of so great moment and importance, that probably the sacred history would have been full of it, and succeeding prophets would often have referred to it, as more memorable than even the calamity of Sodom, as such a visitation on God's people would certainly have been; whereas there is an entire silence elsewhere, with relation to any such judgment. And I am sure it is impossible to infer it from hence, because *The overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah* was proverbially used for any very dreadful calamity†, and might with peculiar pro-

* See Psal. xcvii. 3. Isa. xxx. 33. lxvi. 15, 16. Jer. iv. 4. xxi. 12. Lam. ii. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxvi. 5. Amos v. 6. Nah. i. 6.

† Deut. xxix. 23. Isa. i. 9. xiii. 19. Jer. xlix. 18. l. 40. Zeph. ii. 9. Mat. x. 15.

priety express any devastation that was made by fire, though kindled in a common manner.

As for the fires here mentioned, it is possible some of them might have been kindled, by what men in their common forms of speech call some unhappy accident; and drought, and winds, and other circumstances might concur, to spread that conflagration, which at first arose from a little spark, or some trifling instance of negligence. Others of these fires might be kindled by a cruel enemy: for though Joash, the father of Jeroboam the Second, in whose days Amos prophesied, was in the main a prosperous and successful monarch, yet being engaged in frequent wars with his neighbours, it is not improbable that the frontiers of his country might sometimes suffer by them. And we are particularly informed of a Syrian war, which had happened some years before: for we are told, that in the days of Jehoahaz, *The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of Hazael king of Syria, and Benhadad his son, all their days* *, and *He oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz* †. And since this Hazael carried his inhumanity so far, as to *Dash* even *their children* in pieces, *and* to *rip up their women with child*, it is no wonder also, that he should *set their strong holds on fire;* as we are expressly assured that he did ‡.

But whatever was the occasion of the conflagration, whether the cruelty of enemies, or negligence, or accidents, you plainly see, that God claims it to himself, as his own deed, that *he had overthrown them;* agreeable to the general principle which is laid down in this very prophecy, as what every man's conscience must bear testimony to, that there is no *Evil in a city*, that *the Lord hath not done* §. And it is a most evident and important truth, discovered and attested even by natural religion, that all the efficacy of second causes is owing to the continual operation of the Supreme. He appointed fire and water to be, in their various natures, useful to mankind; and when he pleases, he can turn both into a scourge. Thus when the *rains descend, and the floods beat* down the fruits of the field, and overwhelm houses, with their inhabitants, it is he that *Breaks up the fountains of the deep, and opens the windows of heaven* ‖. And when the flames break out with impetuosity, and the fiery deluge spreads itself abroad, it is *The breath of the Lord* that *kindles it* ¶, and keeps it up; nor does one single

* 2 Kings xiii. 3. † Ver. 22. ‡ Kings viii. 12. § Amos iii. 6.
‖ Gen. vii. 11. ¶ Isa. xxx. 33.

spark rise or fall without his providential interposition and guidance. An observation to be applied to all the other events of human life, and which the sacred scriptures every where inculcate, with a plainness and spirit suited to its importance, for the conviction of those ignorant wretched creatures, who live *Without God in the world* *.

2. The prophet farther leads them to reflect on their own preservation from the flames, as an instance of divine mercy.

*Ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning;* this plainly intimates, how narrow an escape they had from the extremity of danger to which they were exposed: and so the expression is elsewhere used, where Jerusalem is represented by the same similitude; *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire* †? It implies, that they were just ready to be consumed; that the flames were beginning to take hold of them; that *The smell of fire had*, as it were, *passed upon them* ‡, and they were scorched and blackened with it; but yet they were saved, and *Their lives* at least given them *for a prey* §. There may perhaps be some remote reference to the case of Lot, who when God was about to overthrow Sodom, and he loitered in it, was thus delivered; for *The Lord being merciful unto him, the men laid hold of his hand, and brought him out of* Sodom ‖.

Again, as the prophet argues from their preservation, as well as their calamity, to enforce their obligations to return to God, we may infer, that he intended to represent that preservation likewise as his work. Whatever accidental engagements, whatever prudential conduct, might have been the means of it, still it was to be acknowledged, that there was the gracious hand of God in it, which prevented their being destroyed with their habitations. And we lose more than half of the sweetness and advantage of all our deliverances, if we do not see and adore the gracious providence of God in them, and are not thereby engaged in his service. Which leads me to add,

3. It is also intimated in the text, that the design of this afflictive providence was, to bring them to thorough repentance and reformation.

*Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord;* plainly implying, that this was what might, humanly speaking, have been expected, and what was by God intended in the dispensation. This gives us a most edifying and important view of the

* Eph. ii. 12. † Zech. iii. 2. ‡ Dan. iii. 27.
§ Jer. xxi. 9. ‖ Gen. xix. 16.

nature of true repentance; it is a *return to God.* All sin is an alienation of the heart from the service of God, to which we are under ten thousand natural obligations, all highly increased by the revelation God has made of himself to us. Now the very essence of true repentance consists in a *return to God*; in a deep acknowledgment of our guilt in going astray from him, and casting off the easy yoke of his commands; and in renewed resolutions of devoting ourselves, for the future, more entirely to his service. That external reformation, which arises from other inferior motives, is by no means worthy of the name of religion. It may indeed be human prudence; it may be compassion to others, who might suffer by our irregularities: but till God is regarded, yea supremely regarded in it, we cannot reasonably suppose, that God will regard us; which he intimates, when he complains concerning the Israelites, that *They returned, but not to the Most High* *.

Again, the text further implies, that this overthrow by fire had, in its own nature, a tendency to promote such penitent and religious sentiments, and that it was their duty to consider it in this view. And indeed, whatever awakening judgments befal men, it is their wisdom and duty thus to regard them. *The Lord crieth, and the wise man* will hear his voice: *Hear ye the rod, and him that hath appointed it* †. And thus God is represented, as sending very terrible calamities on the Israelites in this very view; *In their affliction they will seek me early*, saying, *Come let us return unto the Lord; for he has torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up* ‡. And it is a most important truth, that he *Does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men* §: which abundantly justifies the goodness of God, in all those penal evils with which our world abounds. Life is to be considered as a state of discipline, and our heavenly Father has recourse to the rod, that it may give wisdom to those, who are too giddy, or too stubborn to learn it by gentler methods. Thus did God call to the Israelites; thus is he calling to you; and may his grace prevent the necessity of joining with the prophet, when,

4. He complains that they had not fallen in with the design of those awful providences, but still continued an unreformed and impenitent people.

*Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*, notwithstanding this judgment, and all the others with which it was introduced. And this charge is advanced no less than five times,

* Hos. vii. 16. † Mich. vi. 9. ‡ Hos. v. 15. vi. 1. § Lam. iii. 33.

within six verses. Though *I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places;* though *I have withheld the rain from you;* though *I have smitten you with blasting and mildew;* yea, though *I have sent among you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain with the sword, and the stench of their camps hath come up unto your nostrils;* and though, to complete all, *I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord* *. Thus the awful majesty of heaven complains, that they had been chastised, and delivered in vain. And indeed, when we come to examine into their history, we find the complaint but too just. Could it be said *they returned to God* when they *Sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;* when they had trodden down *the head of the poor* in *the dust of the earth;* when they added whoredom, and incest, to all their other iniquities; and with mingled rapine and impiety, *lay down before* their idolatrous *altars, on clothes,* which (expressly against the law) they had *taken for pledges, and drank in the house of their* false *Gods, the wine of* those whom they had unjustly *condemned* †? Yet this is the account that God himself gives of the state of things among them, in the preceding chapter, even he who had been witness to their sins, and *Had sworn* by himself, that he *would not forget any of their works* ‡. So evidently does it appear, that the human heart may harden itself against the most dreadful dispensations of divine providence, and, like *That king Ahaz,* even *in* its *distresses* may *trespass yet more against the Lord* §; unless the secret influence of his grace be joined with the stroke of his rod, and while he is *Chastening* them thereby, he *teaches them out of his law* ‖. There is a *Reprobate* kind of *silver,* which will not be purged even by *fire,* when *the bellows are burnt,* and *the lead consumed, the founder* will yet *have laboured in vain* ¶.

Thus I have laid before you those particulars in the text, that appear to me most remarkable and instructive. And though I doubt not but you have anticipated me in your own reflections, yet I hope you will now permit me,

* Amos iv. 6—11. † Amos ii. 6—8. ‡ Amos viii. 7.
§ 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. ‖ Psal. xciv. 12. ¶ Jer. vi. 29, 30.

II. To attempt the more particular application of these things to you, of whom it may with such evident propriety be said, *God has overthrown some of you, and ye were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning.*

And here let me solemnly intreat and charge you,—that you acknowledge the righteous hand of God in what has befallen you,—that you reflect on the mixture of mercy, that has attended this awful providence,—that you make it your earnest prayer, that the dross of sin may be purged away by it,—and that you long retain upon your hearts a permanent sense of these important lessons, which you have seen in so strong and so affecting a light.

1. Let me intreat you to acknowledge the righteous hand of God in this calamity which has befallen you.

Let me address you in those words of the Psalmist, *Be still and know that he is God* *. Be affected with the sense of his interposition, and confess the righteousness of it. Assure yourselves, Sirs, that it is not only a general truth, that as we before observed, all second causes, and fires among the rest, operate only by the divine concurrence, and efficacy, but that it is applicable to the present occasion. It was the hand of the Lord that kindled your fire, and his breath that fanned it into such a terrible blaze. The wind, you say, drove it upon some of the most considerable parts of your town; but under whose command is the wind? And why did it not blow towards an opposite quarter, so as to bear it the contrary way, where it would soon have died for want of fuel? Or why did it not sleep in an entire calm, which might have given you an opportunity of extinguishing the burning with little trouble and damage?

It was his hand; and let it also be remembered, it was a very righteous hand. Know, that God is just in all that he has brought upon you, nay, in all this he *Has punished you less than your iniquities deserved* †. I mean not to insinuate by this, that you of this town are *Greater sinners* ‡, than those that are round about you; or that any inference is to be drawn, as to the character of particular persons, or families, from their share of this calamity, whether more or less. I would not, by any such partial and uncharitable censure, *Add grief to your sorrow* §. Nor would it be reasonable to do it; for in such providences as these, *All things come alike to all*, and *there is one event to the righteous, and the wicked* ‖. But this I confi-

* Psal. xlvi. 10. † Ezra ix. 13. ‡ Luke xiii. 2, 4.
§ Jer. xlv. 3. ‖ Eccles. ix. 2.

dently say, that all the sufferers that hear me this day, how clear soever they may have been from scandalous crimes, nay, however worthy in their character, or however useful in their station, have reason to acknowledge, that there are *with them, even with them, sins against the Lord their God*, sufficient to justify this, and more than this: yea, such will be most ready to say, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed* *: justly might he have delivered us over to *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish* †, to the rage of everlasting burnings, and the darkness of perpetual despair: we *Lay our hands on our mouths* ‡, and our mouths in the dust, and cry out guilty before thee. And while you are thus owning God's justice, let me exhort you,

2. To attend to the mixture of mercy, which has appeared in this memorable providence.

Let me call you this day to see it, and own it, and to mingle songs of praise with your tears. Think not, I beseech you, your case worse than it really is; but acknowledge the goodness of God in every mitigating circumstance that attends it. Most certain it is, most evident to every one that is but a stranger among you, to every wayfaring man that passes by your dwellings, that *in the midst of judgment, God has remembered mercy*: Why else is not your whole town consumed? Why had some of you houses standing, in which to receive your suffering brethren, and stores remaining, out of which to relieve them? Let me address myself to those of you in particular, who were in the near neighbourhood of desolation; to you, that were in a literal sense like *a brand plucked out of the burning*, freed from the flames, that were raging near you, perhaps, I may add, that were devouring all around you; to you, whose houses stand in the midst of the ruins, as monuments of God's peculiar and distinguishing goodness: Now does he demand your sacrifice of praise; and see to it that you retain an abiding sense of the mercy, and of that consequent claim, which he has to distinguished services from you.

But let me address myself to those, who, though perhaps their houses were reached, had opportunities, as I know very many of you had, of saving some considerable part of your goods; or to those who had estates, and substance elsewhere, out of the reach of those flames, perhaps sufficient for the comfortable and honourable support of your families; perhaps, after all this diminution, far more than you were possessed of some

* Lam. iii. 22. † Rom. ii. 8, 9. ‡ Judg. xviii. 19.

years ago. Permit me, Sirs, to tell you, that it would be very criminal ingratitude, to think so much of what you have lost, as to forget your remaining mercies; permit me to say, that you have reason, as it were, to weep over those floods of tears, which you have so profusely shed: To *Faint* thus *in the day of adversity*, argues *your* spiritual *strength* to be *small*;* and perhaps may discover such an attachment to the enjoyments of this present life, as may awaken a serious mind to more afflictive doubts, lest your portion is here, or your *Gods* are *taken away*†.

But what shall I say to those of you, who have lost your all; your houses, your goods, your furniture, your clothing; and are turned out naked and destitute, to seek your bread you hardly know where? I do from my heart condole with such of you; I have felt your affliction myself, and, as I have had opportunity, recommended it to the consideration of others; but you must give me leave to remind you, that even in your case there is a mixture of mercy: why else are you living among us this day? Is it not something, that *your lives* have been given you *as a prey?* Is it not to be acknowledged as a gracious circumstance in providence, that the fire did not break out in the night, and surround you while you were sleeping in your beds, so as to cut off perhaps the possibility of your own escape; or at least to oblige you, in your first surprise, to fly for your own lives, incapable of assisting those, that were dearest to you? What if when you had a little recovered yourselves from your consternation, and come to examine the ruins, you had found among them the bones of a beloved child, or of a friend, who had been to you as your own soul? There had been a wound indeed, the scar and the pain of which, you must probably have carried to your graves. But your present losses are much less deplorable: for, not to say how much *The spirit of a man may sustain*‡ these afflictions; not to plead, what good sense, and much more religion may do, towards reconciling men to some of the inconveniences of poverty; it is to be remembered, that God may change the scene! Hope at least is remaining, and that not an improbable hope. God has supported you thus far, and already carried you through the most helpless and destitute days of life, that you ever saw, or probably will see. Your brethren, your neighbours, your friends, and benefactors, whether nearer or more remote, have pitied you; and pity alone, much more with those substantial expressions of it, is some balm to our sor-

* Prov. xxiv. 10. † Judg. xviii. 24. ‡ Prov. xviii. 14.

rows. Let me call you this day thankfully to acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of the great author of our beings, who has thus made man the guardian of man; who has implanted this tender feeling in the human mind; so that on the sight of any remarkable distress of our fellow-creatures, we are moved by a most powerful, but amiable kind of instinct, to open our hands, yea, to draw out our souls to them. Happy provision of the God of nature and of grace, which makes the possessions of the wealthy and prosperous a perpetual bank for the support of the distressed; and opens, as it were, amidst heaps of desolation, the sweet fountains of benevolence on one hand, and of gratitude on the other! These things call for your acknowledgment; and you are to remember, that all those supplies are ultimately derived from God, which, from his additional goodness, he chuses to send you by the hands of your fellow-creatures. And I would hope, he will go on to do you good, and will so *Turn* your *captivity*, like that *of Job**, that your present suffering may serve to add a greater relish to succeeding and growing prosperity. At least with regard to the true christian, there remains another more secure, as well as more important hope; that the soul may be enriched by what impoverishes the body, and that these *Light afflictions, which are but for a moment*, may *work out a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory*†: which if you desire, then,

3. Make it your serious concern and earnest prayer, that the dross of sin may be purged away by this burning.

*By this*, said Isaiah the prophet, speaking of very terrible judgments, which God sent among the Israelites, *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin*‡. *Surely* then *it is meet to say unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: that which I know not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more* §. So may it be with you, and you will be unspeakable gainers by this loss; gainers in the true comfort and happiness of the remainder of life, and much more in the future state.

In pursuit of this blessed end, let me, my friends, this day solemnly call you to *Search and try your ways* ‖, and to examine what is that *Accursed thing*, which may have occasioned this trouble and distress ¶. I cannot do you a kinder office, than to assist you in the enquiry. Give me leave therefore to suggest a few reflections; by which I would not be understood

* Job xlii. 10. †2 Cor. iv. 17. ‡ Isa. xxvii. 9. § Job xxxiv. 31, 32.
‖ Lam. iii. 40. ¶ Job vii. 11.

to mean any thing personal, for indeed I cannot intend it; most of you are strangers to me, nor have I reason to suspect peculiar evil of any; but an acquaintance with human nature in general, will very naturally lead me, in the present circumstance, to turn your thoughts inward, that you may *Accomplish a diligent search**. Wherefore has God visited you? Wherefore has he *Written* these *bitter things against you* †?

It may be, some of you have indulged yourselves in a luxurious way of living; and therefore God has stript you of those things, which have been the instruments of it. You have, perhaps, taken a secret pleasure and pride in gay dress, or affected a magnificence of furniture, beyond your rank; and therefore God has consumed your ornaments, and turned you out almost naked and bare. Or you have perhaps been addicted to riot and intemperance, squandering away your substance, and destroying your health, and it may be, your reason, with the abundance of good things God had given you. Just is he then in taking them away; for it is a thousand times better, that intoxicating liquors should be employed, as they have been here, even to quench the flames, or that the choicest dainties should be burnt up, and your money perish with them, than that your reason should be impaired, your health destroyed, and your families reduced by continued extravagance.

Perhaps there are some of you that have been accustomed to make a kind of by-word of hell and damnation, to scatter about in rage, or mere wantonness, oaths and imprecations; which in a professed christian is blasphemous impiety, and which even an atheist must own, to be at best but boisterous and unmannerly nonsense. And if so, justly has God executed upon you that denunciation against *Him that sweareth*; justly has he caused his *curse to enter and remain in the midst of your house, and consumed it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof* ‡.

Or possibly, in other of your houses, the fire of contention has before been kindled; contention between the members of the same family, or between neighbour and neighbour; while a clashing of secular interests with some, or the diversity of religious persuasions and practices with others, have led you to forget the common ties of brotherhood and human kind, and to burn with mutual animosity and wrath. Justly has God written your sin in your punishment, and joined you as companions in suffering and distress; which must surely teach you a better temper, if you are not quite incorrigible.

* Psal. lxiv. 6. † Job xiii. 26. ‡ Zech. v. 4.

But among those of a more peaceable disposition, are there none, that are conscious to themselves of dishonest gain? No *Merchant*, or trader, that *has* held *the balances of deceit in his hand* *, and has allowed himself to keep, as the scripture expresses it, *A weight and a weight, a measure and a measure* †, to buy by the one, and to sell by the other? None, that have *Gone beyond and defrauded their brethren* ‡, and practised arts by which they would have thought themselves to have been greatly injured, if they had met with them from others? If such there be, that as the prophet expresses it, have *Coveted an evil covetousness to their house* §, let them not wonder, if God has verified the words of his servant, so that *The stone has cried out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber has answered it* ‖. And so will it be with those, who may attempt to found their rising houses in falsehood, and to cement them with perjury. And if any have already done it, by giving in, even upon oath, unjust accounts of their losses, let them *Be sure, their sin will find them out* ¶, and their unrighteous gain, the plunder of their fellow-sufferers, will be *bitterness in the* latter *end.*

But to insist no longer upon this head, it is very probable there are some, whose conscience would not allow them in such methods as these, who yet may accuse themselves of having been formerly, in their most prosperous days, backward to actions of bounty and charity; some, in whom the words of Solomon are fulfilled, *They have withheld more than is meet, and it has tended* only *to poverty* **. It may be, when compassionate objects have presented themselves, or been recommended to you, your hearts, instead of being opened and warmed, have rather been contracted; and you have been ingenious in finding out excuses, for not bearing your part in such expences. And now, all that you have spared and saved by such a mean and unworthy temper is gone, and perhaps, through the righteous judgment of God, has carried away with it a great deal more: while the generous and compassionate christian has at least had this satisfaction, that a part of his substance is laid up in the bank of heaven, and secured far beyond the reach of any unhappy accident; for nothing is indeed so truly, and so surely our own, as what we have laid out on such charitable occasions.

* Hos. xii. 7. † Deut. xxv. 13—16. ‡ 1 Thess. iv. 6. § Hab. ii. 9.
‖ Ver. 11. ¶ Numb. xxxii. 23. ** Prov. xi. 24.

And I shall have reason to congratulate you upon your present loss, if, having felt affliction yourselves, and experienced the compassionate assistance of others, you melt into more humane sentiments, and knowing the heart of sufferers, be for the future more ready to relieve them, and more *abundant in every good word and work:* and happy for you will it be, if *The Lord purge* away your dross, *by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning* *, so that you come forth from his furnace as *silver seven times purified*, and take the divine image in brighter and fairer characters. It has been often observed, that places which have suffered by a kind of general conflagration, rise more beautiful out of their ashes. But there will be much greater reason to congratulate you, if by this means your tempers are refined; if the vain become grave, the luxurious temperate, the profane religious, the contentious meek, the fraudulent upright, and the sordid liberal. And sure I am, that with such an alteration, you would be happier in a cottage of clay, than you could have been before in a house of marble and cedar. And that this happy end may be answered, let me exhort you, once more,

4. That you endeavour to retain upon your hearts a lively sense of those important lessons, which you might, as it were, read by the light of these flames.

There are many very instructive truths, which God has often spoken to you from his word, and by his ordinances, which yet might, with some more sensible demonstration, be learned from such a scene of providence. And I doubt not but those that are truly wise, and who have set themselves with strict attention to reflect on what has passed, have prevented me in some of these meditations. Let me for a few moments, however, recall them to your minds, and suggest them to those, who have been either too indolent, or too perplexed, to form them for themselves.

I shall only mention two, which comprehend a great many more.—How vain are worldly possessions, when compared with spiritual and eternal blessings!—And how unutterably dreadful is the divine displeasure, by which fires will be kindled so much more terrible than these!

You have seen here the vanity of worldly possessions, and the superior value of spiritual and eternal blessings; and therefore labour to preserve a sense of it.

You had often before read that expostulation, *Wilt thou set*

* Isa. iv. 4.

*thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards heaven* *. But perhaps you never saw those wings spreading so wide, and rising in so rapid a flight; you never saw so many families undone in an hour, the worth of so many hundreds and thousands of pounds dissipated in the air, and borne away by the wind in blazing and smoaking columns. You could not, when you came to look over the ruins, distinguish between the ashes of the most precious of your goods, and the poorest refuse of them; but they were mingled together, like the dust of the dead. So vain is wealth, and so uncertain is our confidence in riches! Thus all our goods, and our houses may perish. And though our lands may seem a more lasting possession, yet, as you have seen, flames may devour the product of them, either before, or after it is gathered in: ond our lives themselves, yet frailer than almost any thing else, may fail us in a moment. This you have seen with your eyes; and forget it not; but charge it on your conscience, to observe the infinite difference between these transient enjoyments, and spiritual and eternal blessings. Those treasures are not liable to such accidents: as *Neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal* them †, so neither can fire break out and consume them. It is a known story of Bias the philosopher, that when in danger of shipwreck, he saw others concerned about their goods, which were like to be lost, even if they escaped with their lives, he said, in consciousness of superior worth, and therefore superior happiness, *I carry all my treasure with me.* And so can the christian say. The most valuable treasure is that, which by divine grace is laid up in the heart, or, to speak with more strict propriety, in the soul itself; so that should devouring flames surround the house, even the tabernacle of clay, or any other overwhelming calamity demolish it, the heaven-born inhabitant would escape with all its riches, and borrow wings from the tempest itself, to bear it on to eternal blessedness.

Once more, reflect, how unutterably dreadful the wrath of God is, by which fires will be kindled much fiercer than these. *Our God,* says the apostle, *is a consuming fire* ‡; and it is a representation which God himself has made, when describing his displeasure against sin, *Who,* says he, *would set briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together* §. You have seen a burning town, and

* Prov. xxiii. 5. † Mat. vi. 20. ‡ Heb. xii. 29. § Isa. xxvii. 4.

have found it, perhaps, an object of terror beyond all your imagination. But remember, Sirs, the day is approaching, when you must see a burning world: for *The day of the Lord will come*, and that *as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up* *. And though, long before that time, the grave will have received you, and you will *Have no portion any more in all that is done under the sun* †; yet you yourselves must be called forth, and shall arise, to be spectators of that august solemnity: and you shall all behold *The day*, when *the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood* ‡; when *The stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers* thereof *shall be shaken* §; when *The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree* ‖; when *The streams shall be turned into pitch, and the dust into brimstone* ¶, and all the beauties of nature and art shall be sunk into rubbish and chaos. Happy men, who shall then be able to *Lift up their heads* with joy, knowing that their complete *redemption draweth nigh* **; and who *According to* the *promise* of that God, who amidst all the convulsions and revolutions of nature is still the same, *look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness* ††.

But let it be remembered, that all this pomp is to usher in that *Day of judgment*, which shall be a day of *perdition to ungodly men* ‡‡: *For a fire shall* then *be kindled in God's anger, which shall burn* even *to the lowest hell*, when it has *consumed the earth with its increase, and* calcined *the* very *foundations of the mountains* §§. And in this view, let *The sinners in Zion* be *afraid*, and let *fearfulness surprise the hypocrites*; for *who can dwell with the devouring fire? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings* ‖‖‖? Yet this, you well know, is the doom of every impenitent sinner; a doom, to be pronounced by the lips of Christ himself, in words which he has already uttered and recorded, that by weighing their terror, we may be roused from our security, and be alarmed to escape it; *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels* ¶¶. Nor can you imagine the sentence shall be pronounced in vain, or that all the confederate nations of the

* 2 Pet. iii. 10. † Eccles. ix. 6. ‡ Joel ii. 31. § Mat. xxiv. 29.
‖ Isa. xxxiv. 4. ¶ Ver. 9. ** Luke xxi. 28. †† 2 Pet. iii. 13.
‡‡ Ver. 7. §§ Deut. xxxii. 22. ‖‖‖ Isa. xxxiii. 14. ¶¶ Mat. xxv. 41.

condemned shall be able to ward it off. But who can sustain the terror of its execution! What, if, while your habitations were in flames, and you were endeavouring to escape for your lives, a host of armed enemies had cut off your retreat, and forcibly driven you back to the fire! You cannot bear the thought; the horror of it strikes you to the heart, and nature shudders at it. But will it not be infinitely more terrible, when legions of angels with irresistible power urge you on, and the wrath of God like an overflowing torrent sweeps you away into *The lake that burns with fire and brimstone* * ? Wretched creatures, that are yet obnoxious to such a destruction! Weep not, Sirs, if this be the case, for your houses and goods consumed. Weep not for your substance wasted, and your families undone. You have a far juster cause for deep lamentation. Mourn over your perishing souls. Say not, we will recover our affairs as fast as we can, by renewed application to worldly business; and much less presume arrogantly to *Say in the pride and stoutness of* your *hearts, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars* †. Remember, that *Pride goes before destruction* ‡; and amidst all the most pressing cares and hurries of life, let it be still considered by you, there is one great concern, that even now demands a more attentive regard; that you may *Flee from the wrath to come*, to *Jesus*, who is appointed to *deliver from it* §. Think not of repairing your losses, and of settling your affairs here; but let me rather say to each of you, as the *Angel* to *Lot, while he lingered* in Sodom, perhaps from too great a regard for the goods he was to leave there, *Escape for thy life; look not behind thee; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed* ‖. I must be insensible of the worth of souls, and most regardless of the great end of my office, if I were not willing to digress much farther than I have now done, to give so necessary a caution. May divine grace make it effectual to awaken those, who, if their present stupidity continue a while longer, must feel those flames, which they will not see!

But I trust, my brethren, there are those of you, whom *God has plucked as brands out of the burning*, in the noblest and most important sense of these words, and who have sought, and found your shelter, from this most terrifying prospect, in the grace of the gospel-covenant. Whatever your other circumstances are, be thankful for this most gracious interposition: let your losses and sorrows sit light on your hearts, while *God*

* Rev. xxi. 8. † Isa. ix. 9, 10. ‡ Prov. xvi. 18. § 1 Thess. i. 10. ‖ Gen. xix. 17.

*has appointed salvation* itself *for walls and bulwarks* *. But still be sure that you maintain that active zeal, and continued watchfulness, which suits your obligations to God, and your expectations from him; and *Seeing that you look for such things, be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace* †. In the mean time, *Encourage yourselves in the Lord your God* ‡, well knowing, that if the foundations of the earth were to shake and the arches of heaven to burst asunder, it becomes the soul, that is supported by its God, to stand the shock with intrepid courage; as being assured, that nothing can finally crush and overwhelm him, who is covered by the shield of the Almighty; and *That the trial of* the good man's *faith*, which is far *more precious than* that *of gold which perishes, though tried in the fire, will* certainly *be found to honour* and joy at last §.

Such may the event of all your trials be! So may divine grace animate every heart that hears me! So may it visit all who have been sufferers by the loss, or shared in the alarm, though they share not with us in the devotions of this day! May the compassionate eye of God regard you, and your habitations! may his providence cement, strengthen, and adorn them; for *Except the Lord build the city, they labour in vain that build it* ‖ *!* May *The candle of the Lord shine on* your tabernacle ¶, and his Spirit enlighten and renew your souls! May peace and prosperity, friendship and religion, always flourish in this town and neighbourhood! And in a word, may God so compassionate your calamity, as to give you *Joy for mourning*, and *beauty for ashes* **; that those who have lamented over you, may rejoice with you; and that at length you may share the security and joy of *The city of God* even *the heavenly Jerusalem* ††, where no flames shall be felt, but those of love, and no sound heard, but the accents of everlasting triumph and praise! Amen.

* Isa. xxvi. 1. † 2 Pet. iii. 14. ‡ 1 Sam. xxx. 6. § 1 Pet. i. 7.
‖ Psal. cxxvii. 1. ¶ Job xxix. 3. ** Isa. lxi. 3. †† Heb. xii. 22.

## POSTSCRIPT.

THE following Hymn, though not considerable on any other account, was judged so suitable to the occasion, that many of my friends united in their request, that it might be printed with the sermon, after which it was sung: I was the more willing to comply with it, lest the multiplication of incorrect copies should make it yet more imperfect than it is. But hardly any thing was ever farther from my thoughts, than the publication, either of this, or of the discourse itself.

### THE HYMN.

ETERNAL God! our humbled souls
Low in thy presence bow:
With all thy magazines of wrath,
How terrible art thou!

II.

Fann'd by thy breath, huge sheets of flame
Do like a deluge pour;
And all our confidence of wealth
Lies moulder'd in an hour.

III.

Led on by thee, in horrid pomp,
Destruction rears its head;
And blacken'd walls, and smoaking heaps,
Through all our streets are spread.

IV.

Deep in our dust we lay us down,
And mourn thy righteous ire;
Yet bless that hand of guardian love,
Which snatched us from the fire.

V.

Oh that the hateful dregs of sin,
Like dross were perish'd there;
That in fair lines our purer souls
Might thy bright image bear!

VI.

So might we view with dauntless eyes
That last tremendous day,
When earth, and seas, and stars, and skies,
In flames shall melt away!

# DEDICATION

## TO A SERMON ON A DAY OF PUBLIC HUMILIATION.

*To the Honourable Col. James Gardiner.*

SIR,

I AM far from thinking, that I pay any part of the debt which I owe to your most engaging friendship, by presenting you with this plain discourse; on the contrary, I am sensible, that by your permitting me to inscribe it to you, that debt is increased: but obligations to so much goodness as I have experienced in you, sit so easily and so pleasantly upon me, that no objection arises from that quarter. And it has this claim to your patronage, that many of the thoughts are as much yours as mine; having been talked over between us with a great deal of freedom. I know, Sir, they are such as make a very deep impression on your heart, and such as you strenuously labour to promote among those who have the happiness of being under your command; and I am confident you will think it no reproach to you to avow them in the most public manner, as your whole life always speaks your steady regard to those principles on which they are built.

I heartily congratulate you, Sir, and I congratulate the public, on the visible effects of your resolute and courageous zeal for religion, in the remarkable sobriety and regularity of those to whom your influence most directly extends; and I doubt not, but it has extended much farther than the company, or even the regiment, to which you stand peculiarly related. Were our officers and our soldiers in general such, I am persuaded it would soon appear, how much *righteousness exalteth a nation;* and that he who is *wisdam to the* pious *counseller,* would also be *strength to them that turn the battle from our gates* to those of the enemy: so that our commanders, like the hero who has furnished me with my motto, might well give it for their word, *God our ally and our general.*

To all the prayers which I have been offering for my country in the progress of that discourse of which I now beg your acceptance, permit me to add this one more, that to whatever services you may be called in its defence, that God, whom you serve, in all may continually watch over you for good, and prolong to many future most honourable and important years, a life so faithfully devoted to him. My heart reveres you too much, to permit me to tell the world, so immediately in your presence, the high sentiments it entertains of you; and I am (with an affection, which is, perhaps, too ready to forget the formalities of a public address, in the tenderness of private friendship,)

*My dear Colonel,*
*Your most faithful,*
*most obliged,*
*and most obedient*
*humble servant,*
*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, Feb.* 25, 1739-40.

# SERMON II.

## ON A DAY OF PUBLIC HUMILIATION.

Deut. xxiii. 9.—*When the Host goeth forth against thine Enemies, then keep thee from every wicked Thing.*

THE acknowledgment of that *God, in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways* *, is a duty in its obligation so evidently reasonable, in its exercise so delightful, and in its natural consequences so variously advantageous, that one would hope it should be the prevailing temper among men; a temper which should run through the most agreeable and secure scenes of life, since that agreeableness and security is the effect of divine care and goodness. Nevertheless we too generally see, that in this respect men are lulled asleep by those gentle gales of prosperity, which waft them on towards a haven they desire; but when cross and contrary winds arise, and beat upon them, the noise, the motion, the danger of the tempest often awakes them, and engages them, like the *Mariners* in the ship with *Jonah*, to call *every one upon his God* †. I would hope indeed, that I am now addressing many, who have made prayer the business and the joy of their prosperous days; and such may with peculiar pleasure and confidence have recourse to it in circumstances of extremity, if God should be pleased to lead us in such circumstances. In the mean time, I doubt not, but it is with great readiness that such numbers of you have obeyed the wise and pious call of our sovereign, to assemble this day, "That we may humble ourselves before almighty God, in order to obtain pardon of our sins; and may in a most devout and solemn manner send up our prayers and supplications to the divine Majesty, for averting those heavy judgments which our manifold sins and provocations have most justly deserved, imploring his blessing and assistance on our arms, and for restoring and perpetuating peace, safety, and prosperity to us."

* Dan. v. 23. † Jonah i. 5.

Christian princes have seldom omitted on such occasions as these, to give such calls to their subjects; and they have instructive precedents for it in scripture. They might learn it from the conduct of pious *Jehoshaphat*, who, when numerous nations were conspiring against him, *set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah*; that they might *gather themselves together, to ask help from him* *. Yea, the hint might be taken even from the behaviour of the *King of Ninevah*, who, when the prophet had so solemnly declared in the name of God, that this country should be destroyed, *rose from his throne, and laid aside his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes*, at the same time *causing a* most rigorous *fast to be proclaimed through Ninevah, by his own decree, and that of his nobles;* an abstinence, in which, the more forcibly to impress the minds of men, *the beasts* were also to share, and *neither to feed, nor drink water;* and those of them which had appeared in that luxurious city in the most sumptuous trappings and decorations, were in the sad procession, like their masters, to be *covered with sackcloth.* With such low prostration was the whole nation, as one man, to *cry mightily unto God*, to avert his displeasure: but it is worthy of our remark, that the light of nature and reason taught that prince also to add, in his royal mandate for a general humiliation, *Let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands* †.

Now as obedience to the government, and love to the public, must engage every faithful minister to labour to address his people this day, on such a subject, and in such a manner, as he judges most suitable to its great design; I thought it my duty to fix my own meditations and yours, on the absolute necessity of national and personal reformation, in order to a well-grounded expectation of success in war. This the king of Ninevah inculcated, as you have heard; and Moses also had long before solemnly urged it, in the words of my text; *when the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.* And surely every one's conscience will tell him, how fit it is, that, after we have been pouring out our confessions and our supplications before God, we should attentively reflect upon such a charge as this, lest future iniquities, aggravated even by the humiliation of this day, should prove our speedy, and our final destruction.

You see the words contain a very plain and intelligible ad-

* 2 Chron. xx. 3, 4. † Jonah iii. 6—8.

monition to Israel, of the peculiar care with which they should guard against any unreformed wickedness, when, like Great-Britain at this day, they were engaging in war: and they are a charge, not only to the soldiery, in such circumstances as these, to abstain from rapine, cruelty, and debauchery, as well as from any superstitious regard to those idols, which they might meet with in the camps and cities of their enemies; but also to the people in general, to be careful, that they did not, by any impieties or immoralities at home, bring down the curse of God upon their arms, and blast the success even of the most righteous cause.

Before I proceed to a more particular consideration of the words, I will very readily allow, they might have some peculiar weight, when considered as addressed to the Israelites; for they had God in a very extraordinary manner present among them; as the ark, often called *the footstool of his throne*, was now in the midst of their camp; and, when it was not, there were other *holy instruments* committed to the charge of the *anointed of the field*, by which God was to be consulted, and his presence acknowledged. Upon this account we find, in the following words, they are urged to keep themselves, not only from moral, but also from ceremonial, and even natural pollution; that the order, decency, and cleanliness of their camp might be an habitual expression of their reverence for that God, who condescended to appear among them as their General, and their King: *For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp; —therefore shall it be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee* *.

It may also be proper to recollect upon this occasion, that the Israelites were under something of a peculiarly equal providence; and consequently might expect victory or defeat, as they were obedient, or disobedient to the divine command, with a certainty greater than is common to other nations. For though indeed it is probable, that, in a series of years, the prosperity or calamity of a nation will be proportionable to its general virtues or vices; yet the peculiar covenant which God had made with Israel, not only seems to have engaged him to a more immediate retribution, but likewise extended itself to all those peculiar institutions, which they as a separate nation were under. Therefore does he particularly tell them, that *If they did not observe to do all his commandments and statutes*, he

* Deut. xxiii. 14.

would *cause them to be smitten before their enemies; they should go out against them one way, and flee seven ways before them* *; thereby strongly intimating, and indeed with the utmost reason, that the presumptuous violation of any ceremonial or positive precept would be attended with fatal consequences; of which, you well know, the defeat brought upon the whole army of Israel for the sin of Achan, in secreting *the accursed thing*, was an early and very memorable instance; as well as the severity, with which that crime was punished, on the offender, and his family †. And it was indeed a merciful method which God took, to preserve Israel in an external and visible adherence to the religion and the institutions he had founded among them, thus immediately to animadvert upon them by his chastising providence, whenever they deviated from it, though in circumstances otherwise indifferent; and it may be in those, in which human policy would have dictated a very different conduct, had not a divine command interposed: which, by the way, is particularly apparent in the effect of *multiplying chariots and horses* which were always a curse, instead of a defence to Israel, how useful soever they might have been to other nations; because God had required them to employ infantry alone, as that by which, the more immediately to shew his interposition, he would save them, when they depended upon him.

I pretend not therefore to maintain from these words, that we are concerned in them, just in the very same manner and degree, that the Israelites were; yet I doubt not but I shall be able,

I. To prove, that we are highly concerned in this caution which is given to them. And then,

II. I shall endeavour to illustrate it, by the mention of some particular evils, against which, in our present circumstances, we are peculiarly obliged to guard. After which,

III. I shall conclude with some inferences from hence, further suited to the occasion of this day's most solemn assembly.

I. I am to prove, that we are all much concerned in the caution that is here given; and that as ever we, or any other nation, would reasonably expect success against our enemies, it is necessary that *when we go forth against them, we should keep ourselves from every wicked thing*.

You will remember, I pretend not to assert, that the event

* Deut. xxviii. 15, 25. † Josh. chap. vii.

of every battle, or of every war, will always bear an exact proportion, either to the justice of the cause, or to the virtue and piety of those that are engaged in it. Indeed the event of some wars, especially towards the beginning of the reformation, wherein the sufferers were persons of the most excellent, and the victors of the most hateful characters, is too sad an evidence to the contrary*. I am very ready to allow, that in some instances, to form the hearts of his people to more eminent attainments in goodness by scenes of distress, or for other reasons to us unknown, God may determine events otherwise: yet I think I may very safely venture to affirm, that we can never form any just expectation of continued success and prosperity in our military affairs, unless there be a zealous concern about a reformation in our manners; and unless national piety and virtue be our earnest and governing care. And this may sufficiently appear, if we consider, on the one hand, that the divine favour can only reasonably be expected by those, who are careful to keep themselves from evil; and on the other, that prosperity in military affairs does evidently depend on the divine favour. Both these considerations are so plain, that they might almost be admitted as self-evident; though in order to impress them more deeply upon our minds, I shall spend a few words upon each.

1. The divine favour can only reasonably be expected by those, who are solicitous to keep themselves from moral evil.

I might introduce what I have further to say on this head, by observing, that the moral perfections of God seem evidently deducible from his natural; for to suppose otherwise concerning him, would be indeed to suppose him worse than even the very vilest of men, who, if they act unrighteously, where they know what is reasonable and fit, do it as tempted by some self-interest; a temptation, to which an almighty Being cannot possibly be obnoxious. Now the consequence from his being perfectly holy and righteous himself, to his loving the like character, and hating the contrary, in his reasonable creatures, is so plain, that the apostle appeals to every one's conscience to bear witness to it:

* I hardly know a more memorable instance of this, than in the success of that perfidious and ungrateful war, which the Emperor Charles V. undertook against those two pious and worthy princes, John Frederick, elector of Saxony, and Philip, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassal; in which the Emperor was supported by a considerable number of Spanish and Italian forces, who marked their way through Germany with unheard-of cruelties; and particularly, (as the Landgrave himself asserts in his manifesto) cut off the hands and feet of little children, to testify their hatred against the protestant religion, which their parents professed. "Pueris ipsis et infantibus resecare manus atque pedes, odio nimirum doctrinæ." Sleid. de Stat. Relig. lib. xviii. p. 71.

*What fellowship*, says he, *hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what communion hath light with darkness*?* It must then be granted, that as *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and his countenance beholds the upright†;* so his *Face* must be *set against them that do evil*, that sooner or later he may *cut off the remembrance of them from the earth‡*. Wicked men have reason therefore to be afraid of his judgments; and they have especial reason to fear them, who, like the inhabitants of Great Britain, have been favoured with the clearest knowledge of his will, have received the most eminent deliverances from him, and have for a long series of years been preserved in peace and prosperity; while at the same time, that they have called themselves his people, they have acted in a visible contrariety to their profession, and thereby brought proportionable dishonour upon his name. This is a case greatly to be feared in every condition, and it is especially worthy of our consideration in our present circumstances; because

2. It is most evident, that the success of military affairs does entirely depend upon the divine protection and favour.

This is a well known maxim of the word of God; and considering the natural pride of our hearts, it was fit that it should be deeply inculcated. It is therefore repeated again and again; and it is observable, that it comes most frequently from the pen of David, who was himself so courageous a warrior, and so illustrious a conqueror. *No king*, says he, *is saved by the multitude of a host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength: A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall he deliver any by his great strength: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, to deliver their soul from death§*. And we shall have occasion hereafter, to mention many other passages equivalent to those.

It would indeed be thus, if the success of battle was always proportionable to the number, strength, and skill of those respectively concerned in it; for all the strength, and all the skill of creatures is derived from God, and is supported by him. But we find in experience, as well as in scripture, that events often arise, in which it evidently appears, *That the battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift‖;* and circumstances happen, in which, with some allowance for the figurative expression, *One chases a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight¶*.

Much of the success of military actions depends upon the

* 2 Cor. vi. 14. † Psal. xi. 7. ‡ Psal. xxxiv. 16. § Psal. xxxiii. 16—19.
‖ Eccles. ix. 11. ¶ Deut. xxxii. 30.

weather, which almost the whole world acknowledges to be apparently at the divine disposal, and to be quite beyond any human alteration or controul. Wind and rain, cold and heat, have been the destruction of thousands, who imagined themselves most secure of victory and success, even in land engagements. Much likewise depends upon a variety of little accidents; and especially, with respect to the discernment of those that command, and the alacrity of those who engage. Now God at pleasure takes away the spirit of princes, and dejects *The men of might*, so that they are not able to *find their hands**. He sometimes diffuses among mighty armies a spirit of discord, so that confederate forces desert, or destroy one another†; or perhaps sends a sudden panic upon them ‡, and then, be their forces ever so numerous, the entrance of fear is the beginning of a defeat, in which numbers, instead of helping, only crowd, and bear down, and trample on each other. It is evident to all acquainted with history, that, by such incidents as these, small numbers have been rendered victorious, even almost beyond their expectation, and have stood astonished at their own success.

This is a remark peculiarly applicable to naval preparations. Their prosperity most evidently depends on the most uncertain elements, the winds and the waves; and he that *Gathers the winds in his fist* §, can with infinite ease pen up the most gallant fleets in their harbours, and waft over to defenceless ports, in the very neighbourhood of them, invading enemies in transports by no means a match for the fine navies, on which the sovereign of the sea has laid his embargo. Yea, at his command *The ships of Tarshish* shall be dashed in pieces *with an east wind* ‖, and their bulk and strength only serve to give each other the more violent shocks, and to spread the wider ruin. This is a thought especially worthy our attention, who have in so many instances, within the memory of man, owed the preservation of our domestic peace, and probably it may be added, even that of our religion and liberty, to the interposition of the wind in our favour. A circumstance, which our enemies themselves have recorded with surprise, though we are, alas, too insensible of it ¶.

*Psal. lxxvi. 5, 12. †2 Chron. xx. 22, 23. ‡2 Kings vii. 6, 7. §Prov. xxx. 4. ‖Psal. xlviii. 7.

¶ Not only the story of the Spanish invasion, and that of the arrival of the prince of Orange, our great deliverer, in 1688, are memorable instances of this; but also the invasions afterwards attempted, either by king James the second, or the Pretender and his agents; of which I cannot recollect any one that has not been defeated chiefly by winds, and those such as we ourselves could have wished. And as I think that Father Orleans, in his History of the English Revolutions, men-

We see then how incontestibly it appears, that the prosperity of our arms entirely depends upon the divine favour: and indeed the truth of this is so evident, that dissolute as the generality of mankind are, there are few of them entirely unimpressed with it. It is certain, that many of those vices, which tend to provoke God, do at the same time render men's circumstances desperate, their spirits mean, and their constitutions weak. Riot and debauchery unbrace the nerves; and in proportion to the degree in which they are indulged, render the glutton, the drunkard, and the whore-monger, incapable of sustaining those hardships, which would be comparatively easy to those, who had been long trained up under the discipline of abstinence, sobriety, and industry. But, besides all this, guilt of every kind naturally makes men cowards; whereas conscious integrity and uprightness is a kind of impregnable armour, which secures the heart from fear, even in the midst of danger. This Solomon well knew, and therefore says, *The wicked flee when no man pursues; but the righteous are bold as a lion**. And indeed that man, who apprehends himself under the guardianship and defence of divine providence, may well be courageous; and when he can say, *The Lord is my light, and my salvation*, he may justly add, *Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident*†: for he has all the reason in the world to be assured, that God will either shield him from danger, which in the most perilous action he can easily do; or if he suffer him to fall by it, will open him a passage to eternal glory, by the wounds he may receive in a righteous cause. Whereas the man who is *Condemned by his own heart*, cannot easily flatter himself so far, as inwardly to imagine, that he is not condemned by that *God* who *is greater than his heart, and knoweth all things*‡. Nor can he always forget how entirely he is in the hand of that tremendous Being, whom his disobedience has made his enemy: and it is no wonder if *Death* appear terrible, when he has so much reason to fear, that *hell will follow it* §; for though it is an easy thing to jest with its distant terrors, it is not so easy deliberately to brave them, when they seem to approach. You may therefore ob-

tions some of the former instances, with particular regard to this circumstance; so I know the author of the late Duke of Berwick's Life, remarks it as to some of the latter, in some passages which struck me so agreeably in reading, that I am sorry I have not now an opportunity, either of inserting, or referring to them.

* Prov. xxviii. 1. † Psal. xxvii. 1, 3. ‡ 1 John iii. 20. § Rev. vi. 8.

serve, that, in order to lay conscience asleep, politic men have often contrived to blow up a wicked soldiery with an apprehension, that what they might want in the regularity and virtue of their behaviour, they had in the goodness of their cause, or in the orthodoxy of their belief; that a persuasion of the piety of their cause, might at least be a balance to the impiety and licentiousness of their characters: yea, they have, it may be, consecrated their cruelties as an atonement for their debauchery. What artifices have been used to this purpose, and by whom, it is by no means my present business to enquire; but I look upon it as a sort of testimony, borne often by the worst of men to the importance of some religious hopes in military affairs; as it does, on the other side, appear from what was before said, that these hopes can only be reasonably entertained by those, who are disposed to a thorough reformation of their lives, or, in the language of the text, to *keep themselves from every wicked thing, when their host goes forth against the enemy.*

But in order to render these general reflections more useful, by bringing them to a point, permit me, in the second place,

II. To hint at some of those evils, which we should, in our present circumstances, be particularly careful to guard against.

And here I must in the very first place, mention that, in which all the other particulars, which might occur on this occasion, are in effect contained, as in their fatal cause; and observe,

1. That "a profane contempt of that divine revelation, with which God has favoured us," is one great evil, that should be carefully avoided.

As I cannot, so I hope I need not, be large in shewing, how admirably the whole tenor of the word of God, and especially the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we all profess to believe, is calculated to promote a general reformation in mankind; and how certainly it will promote it, in proportion to the degree in which it is cordially received. It indeed most powerfully tends, not only to regulate the life, but to awaken and impress the conscience; not only to control those evil actions, which, though detrimental in some measure to society, may not be cognizable by human laws, but also to suppress, and even eradicate, those irregular affections and passions, from which such actions proceed. We can therefore wish nothing better to our country, than this gospel, this *Glorious gospel of*

*the blessed God**, may be universally considered, embraced, and obeyed: and I am persuaded, nothing would have an happier aspect upon our public affairs, than that we should all labour to our utmost to promote its establishment, and its influence over the minds of men.

We have the more reason to be concerned about it, as perhaps there is no christian nation under heaven, in which bolder and more mischievous assaults have been made upon revealed religion, than among us: and though it has so friendly an aspect on the comfort of individuals, and the happiness of society, the licentiousness of some, and the pride of others, has engaged them to unite against it, as against a common enemy, and to treat it with a contempt, equal to that veneration it might justly have demanded. This is indeed the natural consequence of that liberty which we enjoy, not only of thinking for ourselves, which none can prevent, but of freely professing our own sentiments: a liberty so honourable to human nature and to truth, and on many accounts (as I have elsewhere shewn†,) so profitable, that I think no wise man could wish it were restrained. Yet the more freely we assert it, the more careful should we be by all rational and christian methods to prevent its abuse, and to guard against those bad consequences, which, good as the thing itself is, are almost inseparable from it.

Let all who believe the gospel, take heed how they trifle with it; and let all who have any scruples concerning it, make their enquiries into its evidences with all possible diligence, humility, and impartiality; which if they do, they will undoubtedly end in a more established belief. And let us all, according to our abilities, exert ourselves for its defence; not only by pleading its cause by arguments, so far as we have an opportunity in our respective places to do it; but also by bearing our testimony to its importance, as well as its truth; and above all, by labouring to the utmost to make our lives a continued and prevailing apology for it, which they will be, if they are steadily governed by its holy dictates.

To excite us to the greater care on this head, let it be remembered, that nothing is more highly displeasing to God, than the contempt of that revelation which he has sent. They that *despised Moses's law*, found it so to their cost; for when *They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy;* and *he brought* an invading enemy

* 1 Tim. i. 11. † Sermon on Persecution.

*upon them, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man, or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age* *: And we cannot expect, that the effects of his displeasure will be less terrible, if we will not reverence his Son. It is owing to his wonderful patience, that we have not long ago been made a monument of his wrath, and *Punished for* these *iniquities*, as remarkably as we have been *known by him* beyond most of the other nations of the earth †. Our guilt on this head makes it more necessary to add,

2. "The luxurious abuse of the favours of divine providence, which have in so long a peace been flowing in upon us," is another evil to be guarded against, if we would reasonably expect success in war.

I am now speaking to many, who know, more particularly than I myself do, how plentifully our land has yielded her increase for many succeeding years; insomuch that we have been able to relieve the necessities of neighbour nations, out of our own redundant stores: a providence which has not only prevented corn from growing a drug at home, but has been an occasion of bringing into the nation no contemptible return of riches for a considerable time. Besides this, whatever particular difficulties may have attended some traders, our commerce in general has long been in a flourishing condition. Very considerable estates have been raised; and it is neither to be wondered at, nor blamed, that those who have found their wealth increasing, have thought proper to live in a more liberal, and elegant, and some of them in a more magnificent manner, than before. But I fear, that, in many of those who have thus been distinguished by the blessings of divine providence, this indulgence has grown up into luxury and extravagance, and to a neglect of every honest and industrious employment, whereby God might have been honoured, and the public interest promoted; cares and labours, from which the wealthiest and the noblest of mankind are by no means to think themselves excused; nay, by which they are rather to be proportionably distinguished.

I fear also, that the taste for pleasure and grandeur, which has prevailed so much in persons of plentiful circumstances, has been too eagerly and vainly imitated, by those whose estates and families would have required another kind of conduct.

* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17. † Amos iii. 2.

This, in great measure, may have been the cause of the many bankruptcies, whereby such who have dealt largely, and have affected to deal much more largely than they ought, have frequently drawn down many others, and those, perhaps, more industrious and deserving families into ruin with themselves. While others, in various employments, have been obliged to have recourse to mean artifices, to shore up a sinking credit for a while, till all those props have at last only made the ruin the greater, and the more unpitied; and all this to the unspeakable reproach of religion, which has sometimes been vainly pretended to by those, whose conduct has been most contrary to its essential precepts. Indeed, to speak freely, I can by no means think, the great affectation of ornament in dress, and magnificence in living, which is the expensive taste of the present age, can bode well to the public. *The sins of Sodom, pride, and idleness, with fulness of bread* *, have long been in the midst of us; and if they are not reformed, they must, both by their natural consequence, and by the righteous judgment of God, involve our nation in destruction. We have long been *Made to eat the increase of the field, to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock:* we have been fed *with the fat of kidneys of wheat, and drank the pure blood of the grape;* till like *Jeshurun*, we have *waxed fat and kicked* †: and, therefore, as the guilt has been ours, it will be but righteous, if the condemnation should be ours too; and *A fire should be kindled* against us *in God's anger, that should burn* even *to the lowest hell, that should consume the land with its increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains* ‡. It becomes us therefore, if we would avert the deserved judgments of God, to set ourselves, as in his presence, to examine seriously how we are using the talents he has graciously lent us; and instead of profusely wasting both our time and our stock in vain indulgences, to apply ourselves with honest industry to the proper business of our calling; and by a prudent frugality at home, to lay a foundation for a liberal contribution to the poor. So are we most likely to regain the strength and honour of our nation, which luxury must infallibly enervate and disgrace; and to draw down the blessing of God upon our affairs; as well as to provide some resource for future supplies, if our present preparation should be, which God forbid, unsuccessful, or the war should be prolonged till the burden grow much more sensible, than it can at present be. Again,

* Ezek. xvi. 49. † Deut. xxxii. 13—15. ‡ Ver. 22.

3. "Too great a confidence in our own military strength and preparations," is another evil from which we should be especially solicitous to keep ourselves, in such a conjecture of affairs as this.

Through the abundant goodness of God, the armaments of Great-Britain, both by sea and land, have, so far as I can recollect, in most instances, since the beginning of the present century, been attended with success; and in some circumstances that success has been glorious and remarkable. These being then the latest facts, and facts of so pleasant a nature, are apt to strike our remembrance very strongly; and are now recollected with so much the more pleasure, as the last of them was attended with equal honour to Great-Britain, and shame and disappointment to Spain *. But I fear, that to allude to the expressive language of the prophet, because *We have* often *caught* our enemies *in our net, and gathered them in our drag*, we are fallen into the absurd impiety of *sacrificing to our net, and burning incense to our drag* †. And though it is to be sure a pleasant thing, to see our nation engaging in this necessary war with ardour and cheerfulness; and the apparent righteousness of our cause may indeed encourage our humble hopes; yet I cannot forbear saying, that I fear that great eagerness which in many instances has been shewn on this occasion, has proceeded from a forgetfulness of God, and a proud confidence in ourselves; as if victory were chained to our chariot-wheels, and the winds, so often indeed listed our banners, were always to blow according to our directions; as if the artillery of our ships were as unconquerable, as that of heaven itself, and we could at pleasure send forth our thunder, and scatter our enemies, and shoot out lightnings, and discomfit them.

But let it be remembered, that Pharaoh stood on the very verge of disgrace and destruction, when he said, *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, and my hand shall destroy them* ‡. Yea, let us remember in general, that *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall* §. I can wish, no happier omen, than that we should learn the language and sentiments, which that martial hero, whom we mentioned before on a like occasion, so often inculcates upon his

* I suppose few need to be told, that I refer to that glorious expedition to Sicily, in the year 1718, which was conducted with so much spirit, prudence, and bravery, by Admiral Byng, afterwards Viscount Torrington.

† Hab. i. 15, 16. ‡ Exod. xv. 9. § Prov. xvi. 18.

people; that we may say with him, *In the name of our God will we set up our banners* *; *Through thee will we push down our enemies; through thy name will we tread them under, that rise up against us; for I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me* †. Though *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, we will remember the name of the Lord our God* ‡; for God *Delights not in the strength of the horse, neither takes he pleasure in the legs of a man* §, so that his victory should be proportionable to their strength, and their agility: and therefore, though in some cases *The horse may* prudently *be prepared against the day of battle:* yet still it must be acknowledged, that *Safety is of the Lord* ‖. *He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder, he burns the chariot in the fire* ¶; *Salvation belongs to the Lord; his blessing is upon his people* **. We have indeed no warrant to expect a miraculous interposition of God in our favour; and it would be folly and wickedness, in a dependance upon that, to neglect any necessary methods of defence: but still it is to be remembered, that, as we proved under the former head, the success of all is from above; and that it is, on the whole, *Through God* alone *we can do valiantly*, and *he it is that must tread down our enemies* ††. This we are solemnly acknowledging in the devotions of this day; and God grant, that it may fix on our minds that pious humility, which, as it is perfectly consistent with the firmest valour, has in some very remarkable instances been a prelude to the most glorious success.

Let me add, but this once more,

4. "Too keen a resentment for injuries received from our enemies, growing into a malignant hatred against them," is another evil, which we should be peculiarly solicitous in our present circumstances to avoid.

It is certain indeed, that some of those violences, which have been offered us, have been attended with circumstances of such barbarity and contempt, as cannot but awaken a strong indignation; and the genius of Britons can very ill brook such kind of treatment. Yet permit me to say, that it would be unjust to charge the whole Spanish nation with such enormities, as have been committed by some, probably in the number of the most abandoned among them. Humanity is not the growth of one particular climate, but a happy inheritance divided among the various inhabitants of the earth; and I doubt not,

* Psal. xx. 5, † Psal. xliv. 5, 6. ‡ Psal. xx. 7. § Psal. cxlvii. 10.
‖ Prov. xx. 31. ¶ Psal. xlvi. 9. ** Psal. iii. 8. †† Psal. cviii. 13.

but it teaches many among them to abhor the villanies of their countrymen. But if not, be that reproach to our enemies; and may it never fall upon us, that we have delighted in the unnecessary misery of our fellow-creatures, and have retorted cruelty for cruelty. We are indeed to wish, that injustice may be so chastised, as that for the future it may be suppressed; but God forbid, that we should thirst for blood and ruin, or take delight to think of the sufferings of any, how ill soever they may have deserved of us!

War, in such circumstances as ours, is the rigorous and severe work of justice, and must be done: but methinks a humane heart consents to it with some sensible regret, and will sometimes bleed to think, that those benevolent and brotherly cares, that ought to fill the heart of one man for another, and of one nation for another, should be turned into thoughts and schemes of destruction; and give place to contrivances, how men may be slaughtered, and cities laid waste, and the beauties of nature and art ravaged and defaced.

It would indeed be a partial and short-sighted tenderness, if potent nations should on these principles suffer themselves to be injured and insulted by every foreign bravo; till at length they sink into contempt, and yield up themselves, or their dependants, a tame and helpless prey to injustice and cruelty. A neglect of the proper methods of self-defence would leave them chargeable before God and man with the calamities resulting from it: yet still it becomes them, in the vindication of their just rights, to guard against that savage fierceness, which forgets that enemies are men *. It becomes us rather to wish, they may be brought to reason by the least destructive methods; and that what they in the mean time suffer, may be a profitable lesson to others, and on the whole to themselves.

I apprehend these admonitions not unseasonable, and having enlarged so far upon them, shall omit some other heads, which might easily be connected with them; and shall,

III. Conclude this discourse with some general reflections.

Now such as these will probably present themselves to most of your thoughts; and no doubt you have anticipated me in some of them.

1. Let us be deeply humbled before God for the evils that are to be found among us.

Let us lie down as it were in the dust, in his sacred presence, when we consider that with us, even with us, there are

* Viri boni est, initia Belli invitum suscipere, extrema non libenter persequi. Sallust.

so many crying abominations to be found, notwithstanding all that God has been pleased to do for us. Let us be humbled before him, not only for the sins of our princes, and nobles, and priests, and people; but more especially under a sense of our own guilt, and of what we have added to the divine displeasure, by offences, if not in their kind peculiarly enormous, yet at least in their circumstances most highly aggravated. Let us borrow the expressions of humble contrition, which were used by God's ancient people, and each of us say with Ezra, *O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens: Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day;—and behold, we are* now *before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee, because of this* *. Let us say with Jeremiah, *We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us; for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God* †. Let us say with Daniel, when he *Set his face unto the Lord God, to seek him by prayer, and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth, and ashes, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and thy judgments:—O Lord, righteousness belongs unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day,—to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee;——neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets:*——Nevertheless, *O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do, defer not for thine own sake, O my God; for thy people are called by thy name* ‡.

Nor let this be words alone, but the deep-felt sentiments of our hearts. Let us call to remembrance our manifold engagements to God, on the one hand, and our transgressions against him, on the other; and acknowledge in the abasement and bitterness of our souls before him, that it would be a righteous thing in him, to bring destruction upon us in its most painful and dreadful forms, to infatuate all our counsels, to blast all our undertakings, to sink our navies in the midst of the sea, to cause our own hearts to melt, and our hands to fail, while those of our enemies were strengthened for our ruin! Let us humbly acknowledge, that he would be just in all that came upon us,

* Ezra ix. 6, 7, 15. † Jer. iii. 25. ‡ Dan. ix. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 19.

if this pleasant land, in which we have enjoyed so great plenty and prosperity, should become a desart; or if we should see those possessions, for which we ourselves have laboured, or which have been transmitted to us from our forefathers, plundered by strangers, or even inherited by enemies. And while we are confessing this, let us endeavour by earnest and importunate prayers to avert these deserved judgments, and wrestle with God *Not to destroy his people* *; but to *Give us* that *help from trouble*, without which we shall find, that *vain is the help of man* †.

Let these thoughts, which I hope are impressing our minds in the solemnities of this day, be carried along with us into our secret retirements; let us spread them before God in our family devotion, and let them have a becoming share in our private worship. And if we desire that these supplications and prayers may not be an abomination to a holy God, let us

2. Be very solicitous to exert ourselves to the utmost, to promote a work of general reformation, according to the various stations in which providence has placed us.

Our care in this respect, if it be earnest and sincere, will begin with ourselves; and we should now particularly consider ourselves, as solemnly called by God to *Search and try our ways*, that we may *turn again to the Lord* ‡. In obedience to that command, let us, as it were, call a court in our own consciences, and impartially judge ourselves, as those that are shortly to be judged of the Lord. Whatever is criminal, whatever is even suspicious in our temper and conduct, let us endeavour to regulate it by the certain rules of religion, and bring all our sentiments and actions to its unerring standard. Let us not only *Cease to do evil*, but *learn to do well* §; labouring to the very utmost, to prevent any reproach to our profession, and to reflect a glory upon it. Could every one be engaged to this, all would be well; nay, should it grow the prevailing temper, we might reasonably hope, that *The innocent would deliver the island;* yea, that it should be preserved *by the pureness of their hands* ‖.

And this will naturally engage us to a proper care of those committed to our immediate charge. It will, no doubt, have an happy influence upon heads of families, to stir them up to *Walk within their houses in a perfect way* ¶; and so to govern, as well

* Deut. ix. 26. † Psal. cviii. 12. ‡ Lam. iii. 40.
§ Isa. i. 16, 17. ‖ Job xxii. 30. ¶ Psal. ci. 2.

as instruct their domestics, that none under their roof and care, may *Make themselves vile*, without being *restrained* by proper discipline*. This would, under God, who very seldom denies a blessing to such pious endeavours, have a happy tendency to secure to our country a race of virtuous and pious youth, whose behaviour might wipe off the stain, which the sins of their fathers have thrown upon it; out of regard to whom God might deal so much the more graciously with us, while they were growing up for public service, and might say of our nation, as in another case, *Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it*†. And, to conclude all,

3. Let us, from what we have now been hearing, be excited earnestly to pray for those, who, by reason of their more public stations in life, may be capable of doing more than ourselves, to promote the work of national reformation.

And here our magistrates justly claim the first share in our remembrance. Let us earnestly pray, that divine grace may possess their hearts with a sense of the importance of their respective offices, and of the strict account they must another day render for the manner in which they have discharged them.—— Let us especially pray for our gracious sovereign, who is calling us to these prayers, and joining with his people in humiliation before the *King of kings, and Lord of lords.* Let us pray, that *The Lord* may *hear him in the day of trouble*, that *the name of the God of Jacob* may *defend him;* that he may *send him help from his sanctuary, and strengthen him out of Zion*‡! That *The king may joy in the strength of the Lord, and in his salvation may greatly rejoice*§! That as he is thus publicly declaring his *Trust in the Lord, through the mercy of the Most High he may not be moved;* but that God's *hand may find out all his enemies, and his right hand may find out those that hate him*‖! That *His glory may be great in God's salvation*, and increasing *honour and majesty may be laid upon him*¶! I am persuaded, there is not a heart that does not answer, amen! May the father of our country hear, that his enemies are humbled abroad! May he see his people united, and reformed at home! Yea, may God *Make him most blessed for ever***; that in the future, and infinitely most important world, they that have been here protected by him in war, and cherished in peace, may see him as much distinguished by celestial glories, as he now is by earthly dignities!—May all our counsellors be wise; and all our judges

* 1 Sam. iii. 13. † Isa. lxv. 8. ‡ Psal. xx. 1, 2. § Psal. xxi. 1.
‖ Ver. 7, 8. ¶ Ver. 5. ** Ver. 6.

faithful! May our legislators enact good laws; and inferior magistrates vigorously execute them! And may all our rulers, from the highest to the lowest, be themselves examples of universal goodness! May they *Scatter away all evil with their eyes**, and make it ashamed by their presence! May they resolutely reform the people, who generally of all others need it most, their own domestics and dependants! And may they have that inward veneration from all about them, which nothing but a character for real religion can give, even to the greatest and wisest of mankind.

Let us pray likewise for our military, as well as our civil officers; that they may exert themselves, with a bravery so well becoming their character, to drive out wickedness, that most dangerous enemy, from our camps and navies, which it has so boldly invaded; yea, where it has by so long a custom claimed a kind of right to pitch its tent, and to set up its banners. This will indeed be a very hard conquest, considering the circumstances in which persons generally enter on such a life, and the great and dangerous leisure which it gives them, in a time of long peace, of corrupting themselves, and each other. Yet the extensive power, which is annexed to superior officers in every regiment, and company, may give them great advantages for serving their country, by regulating the external behaviour of those under their command; and human authority can pretend to regulate nothing more. They may, for instance, be restrained from the open violation of the sabbath, and called to an attendance upon public worship, under one form of it or another; and a great check may be given to that lewdness, debauchery, and profaneness, in which not a few of them vie with each other, as if they were the distinguishing honours of their order. I look upon it as a great ornament, honour, and blessing to our land, that many of our officers are very amiable examples of virtue and piety, and know how deficient even the character of a gentleman is, when notoriously wanting in either. And we in these parts have had many opportunities of observing, how good an influence the inspection of such persons has upon the inferior soldiery, to secure the regularity and decency of their behaviour. Let us earnestly pray, that *The Lord of hosts*, whom we are intreating to *cover the heads* of our warriors *in the day of battle*†, may more generally inspire the hearts of those that lead them forth with his fear, and excite them, however it may

* Prov. xx. 8. † Psal. cxl. 7.

be censured by the abandoned and profane, to exert themselves to the utmost, to form their troops to the discipline of virtue, as well as of war. It is what the credit of their profession, and I will add, the safety of the public requires. And I must take the liberty particularly to say, that when my ears are at any time wounded with those detestable imprecations, which are in many places so common among our soldiery, and which are, I think, an infallible proof of a character thoroughly bad, I am ready to tremble with the sad apprehension, lest their guilt should turn back their weapons of war; and lest God should suddenly send them, from the points of their enemies' swords, or the mouths of their guns, that damnation which they have so wantonly invoked on themselves, and each other.

We are under yet more apparent obligation, to pray for those, that preside in religious assemblies of all denominations; that God would *Clothe his priests with salvation*, as what will have a most important influence to make his people joyful and happy *. May their hearts and hands be united in that good work which is committed to them! May God deliver them from the shame and folly of employing the solemn seasons of public worship, in reproaching their brethren, and animating the hearts of professing christians against each other! An enormity, which, I think, is in our day generally driven out with a just contempt; unless perhaps, it be yet sheltered among a very few, whom great ignorance, or greater wickedness, has reduced to this wretched expedient, as a kind of forlorn-hope. May a better temper universally succeed; and however christian assemblies may differ in some of their forms of worship, yet as they agree in the essentials of it, may their ministers agree in pursuing the same great end; and as they all have one errand, may their language, in the main, be one! May they all speak with plainness, with seriousness, and I will add, with that authority too, which nothing but conscious integrity and goodness can give! Not even amusing, and much less firing the minds of men, with matters of doubtful disputations; but rather exerting themselves to the utmost for that one plain, but glorious purpose, of reforming men's tempers and lives upon the christian plan!

For promoting the efficacy of such labours as these, we should earnestly pray, that all who are employed in them, may be examples of distinguishing piety; and that God would be *Like a refiner's fire, to purify the sons of Levi* †. For while

* Psal. cxxxii. 16. † Mal. iii. 2, 3.

any gross immoralities are observable in their conduct, they will wound religion like a two-edged sword; as their hearers, by a perverseness and inconsistency very natural to the licentious and profane, will look upon it as a sanction at once for despising their persons, and imitating their vices. Ministers of all denominations claim our prayers on these heads: and peculiarly those of established churches; where, as the temporal emoluments are generally greatest, there is of course more to invite unworthy persons to offer themselves to the ministry.—Nor ought we to forget, in our prayers at such seasons, those wise, learned, and pious men, whom our governors may from time to time think fit to raise to the most exalted stations among the clergy, and to invest with a dignity and authority, which though no part of their ministerial office, is capable of being improved to great advantage. It is devoutly to be wished, that they may use their great influence and power, to exclude those that are unworthy, from that important trust, as persons whom they cannot suppose to be called by the Holy Ghost to take it upon them; and that they may preside over the doctrine and behaviour of those committed to their care, in such a manner, as may render both, most edifying to those who attend their instruction. By these pious and zealous endeavours an establishment will flourish, and separate interests decrease. But what folly and iniquity were it, so much as secretly to wish, that one limb might grow by the distemper of the body, or one coast be enriched by the wreck of the public navy!

Once more, let us on the principles on which I am now insisting, earnestly pray for those, who have the care of educating youth intended for public stations. Let us pray for all the universities of Great Britain, and for more private academies and schools; which according to the manner in which they are regulated, will either be the blessing, or the calamity of our country. May those, that are so trained up for one important employment or another, and especially those intended for the ministry of Christ's church, be formed to extensive knowledge, and above all, to the knowledge of the gospel! May they be regulated by proper discipline, that habits of virtue may be formed, as well as principles of science and truth imbibed! May those, to whom God has committed the high and laborious, though honourable, charge of presiding over such societies, ever remember how much they have to answer for, to God, and to their country! May they cultivate these plantations with that assiduity; may they watch over them with that caution; and I will add, may they weed them with that prudence and resolu-

tion, which in concurrence with those influences from above, on which all depends, may render them like a field which the Lord has blessed, and a garden which he continually cares for! There may the rising hopes of future generations flourish, and those plants be reared and spread, which in due time may beautify our land, and refresh and nourish its inhabitants!—And may God so guard our religious and civil liberties from generation to generation, that in this respect, as well as the other, the inhabitants of our favoured island *May sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and have none to make him afraid**. May not the study and the arts of peace, among us at least, be interrupted by the noise of war; may not our ears hear the tumult of battle, nor our eyes see the miserable spectacles it produces! Only by report, may we learn the success of our fleets, and our armies abroad; till we at length hear, that the contention ends in a safe and honourable peace!

And let it not be misinterpreted, as unworthy a British and a christian heart, to add, let us pray for our enemies; for that haughty nation, which despises our prayers, and has treated us with so much injustice and contempt. May they be sensible of the injury they have done us, and of the affront they have, by every act of injustice and cruelty, offered to the Majesty of heaven, the Father of nations, and the Guardian of men; whose penetrating eye sees through the frauds which may cover treaties, and before whose tribunal those criminals must be arraigned, who are too great, or too distant, for the reach of human justice! May Spain have no reason to glory in those vain refuges, to which the idolatrous principles of their unhappy church teach them to fly! May they be disposed to give, and we to receive, all reasonable satisfaction! And oh that, if it were the will of God, their eyes might be opened to see the delusions of popery, which they support in all its darkness, and rigour, and terror! Oh that they might be so happy, as to understand the guilt of those murders, which they are committing in the injured name of the most merciful Jesus! May their princes, and their priests, see how much it is for their own interest on the whole, whatever the principles of carnal policy may dictate, to divest themselves of those spoils of innocence, and ornaments of superstition, which, gaudy as they seem, may mark them out as the objects of divine vengeance! The day will assuredly come, when *The cry of the souls under the altar* shall be heard†; and there is hardly a nation under heaven, that has more reason to dread it,

* Mic. iv. 4. † Rev. vi. 9, 10.

than that with which we are now contending: for none have been more eager, and none more resolute and inexorable, in treading out the first sparks of truth, when it began to kindle among them, and in adding the blood of the martyrs to all their other pollutions*

In what rigour that diabolical engine of mischief, the inquisition, is still established among them, you need not be told; but though its foundations are laid deep as hell, the hand of God can overthrow them. He can shake the firmest arches of the dungeon, and lay open all that laboured artificial darkness to the full lustre of truth and the gospel. May he hasten that happy time, when he will do it; that day, when the all-uniting religion of the blessed Jesus shall exert its genuine influence, and cement the divided kingdoms, that now call themselves his church, in holy friendship and fraternal affection! that happy day, when instead of preparing the instruments, and studying the arts of destruction, *They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks;* when *nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*†; *for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*‡! Amen.

* I doubt not but many of my readers will know, that I here refer to what happened in Spain quickly after the reformation; which we learn particularly from Paramus, an inquisitor, and another popish writer of note, as quoted by Dr. Geddes, in the first volume of his inestimable Tracts, page 447, & seq. viz. That the Spanish divines sent by the emperor Charles the Fifth, and his son Philip the Second, into Germany, England and Flanders, to convert the protestants in those parts to the Roman faith, were themselves converted from popery; and as they were persons of great learning and piety, returned into their native country full of zeal for its reformation; but were immediately seized by the merciless inquisition, and together with many illustrious converts, which were the first fruits of their ministry, were cruelly sacrificed on scaffolds, and at the stake. Dr. Geddes has preserved an account of some of the glorious leaders in that army of martyrs, which, short and incomplete as it is, deserves an attentive perusal.

† Isa. ii. 4. ‡ Isa. xi. 9.

# SERMON III.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

*In the series and conclusion of the late War with France and Spain, preached at Northampton, April 25, 1749, being the Day appointed for a General Thanksgiving.*

Psalm cvii. 43.—*Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.*

AS almost all the nations of the earth have, from their first plantation upon it, had some forms of religion among them, though alas those forms have been too generally erroneous and superstitious, it is observable, they have had recourse to their sacred solemnities, when they have been passing from peace to war, or from war to peace. Among some of the most celebrated of the ancients, war was proclaimed by the ministers of religion, and military expeditions were opened by devout processions and public sacrifices; whereby they seemed to appeal to their deities as witnesses of the justice of their cause, and professedly to put themselves under their protection *. And when the strife of war has ceased, pacific treaties have generally been confirmed by the sanction of mutual oaths; and the festivities which have accompanied the conclusion of them, have crowded the temples with worshippers, as well as the streets and houses with tokens of rejoicing. Well then may such customs prevail in christian states, where our dependance on divine providence is known to such advantage; and most suitable is it to a Sovereign, who esteems it his honour to be called the "Defender of the Faith," after having so often called us together to supplicate the divine blessing on his arms, thus to assemble us this day to return our thanks to the great disposer of all events, for the success with which he has crowned our negotiations of peace. And surely our cheerful compliance is the more evidently reasonable, as all the successes of the war abroad, glorious as some of them have indeed been, were so balanced by

* I am persuaded, that the 149th Psalm is an ode of this kind, that was sung, when David's army was marching out to war against the remnant of the devoted nations, and first went up in solemn procession to the house of God, there as it were to consecrate the arms he put into their hands. The *beds* referred to, ver. 5. on which they were to *sing aloud*, were probably the couches on which they lay at the banquet attending their sacrifices; which gives a noble sense to a passage, on any other interpretation hardly intelligible.

events of a different nature, that our governors, who sing not "te Deum" in vain, did not think it convenient to appoint one day of general thanksgiving on the account of them.

As we well know divine providence to be concerned even in the minutest affairs of the animal or vegetable creation, we must certainly on the most obvious principles, acknowledge its interposition where large communities of men are in question: With relation to these it is peculiarly said, *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things* *. And as a careful attention to providence is always our duty and interest, it will especially appear so in proportion to the importance of the events it produces and directs. To such reflections therefore I would this day invite you, and I know not how to do it better than in the words of the text; which are the more suitable, as the vicissitudes to which they immediately relate are evidently of a public nature; circumstances, whereby men were on the one hand blessed with prosperity and plenty, or on the other hand *Diminished and brought low, through oppression, affliction, and sorrow* †, by such revolutions as did not only affect numbers of private persons, but *Poured contempt upon princes, and caused* those that had once been distinguished, perhaps in cities, provinces, or armies, *to wander* forlorn *in the tractless wilderness* ‡. All these things are supposed under a moral government and superintendancy, which should at length cause *The righteous to rejoice, and iniquity*, how loudly soever it had for a while triumphed and insulted, *to stop its mouth* §, confounded and ashamed. And then it is added, *whoso is wise*, he *will observe these things*; so observe them, as to see the secret hand of God in them, even where the train of events is most natural: And *they*, who attend to them in this light, *shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord* to them that fear him, which shall emerge gloriously out of every cloud that might seem for a while to darken it. Thus the psalm ends: And the propheey of Hosea concludes with a passage exactly parallel to this, in which my text seems to be quoted and paraphrased: *Who is wise and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein* ‖.

Permit me then solemnly to call you this day, to make a serious pause, and to employ that recess from other business

* Isa. xlv. 7. † Psal. cvii. 39. ‡ Ver. 40. § Ver. 42. ‖ Hos. xiv. 9.

which the season and the place gives, in looking back upon the series of events through which we have lately passed, as those, that, believing the universal government of God, would *Regard the works of the Lord*, and *consider the operation of his hands* *. The power of reflection is the glory of the rational nature: May we now be directed to a proper use of it! And it will afford us a calm pleasure, which, though in these circumstances not unchastised with pain, is nevertheless much to be preferred to all the joys of a licentious mirth, to *The laughter of fools*, which Solomon esteemed but *as the crackling of thorns under a pot* †.

It would very ill become me, to pretend to a knowledge of the secret springs of those events which have lately passed before us, or to set up for any peculiar penetration in judging of things which are most apparent. But there are certain obvious remarks which arise from circumstances universally known, which though they be important in proportion to the degree in which they are obvious, some for want of attention may not fall upon, and others may not discern in that connection which is like to render them most useful. I think it therefore congruous to the relation in which I stand to you, and to the occasion of this day's assembly, to endeavour to guide your meditations to them, and to assist you in dwelling on the review.

Let me then mention several things which have lately passed before the eyes of all Europe, as worthy of your farther remembrance and consideration. And I shall endeavour to do it without any unnecessarily severe reflections upon those of our neighbours, with whom we have lately been contending. When hostilities were once commenced, many of the events most grievous to us were justifiable by the laws of nations: And so far as ambition, or any other evil principle, might be the occasions of opening them, may the great preserver of men forgive it, and make us and our new friends for the future wiser and happier! In the mean time, as the most solemn acts of mutual reconciliation have passed, it would be unworthy the generosity of Britons, to rehearse the wrongs, they could not but once apprehend and resent. But it is surely consistent with the sincerest reconciliation, and with all the rules of propriety and decency, on such an occasion as this, to commemorate the divine goodness to us in events, which during the breach were afflictive to those who were then our enemies: And it is with no unfriendly disposition that we wish, they likewise may remember them for their future instruction. I shall not therefore

* Isa. v. 12. † Eccl. vii, 6.

make any farther apology, for what of this nature may occur; but proceed to those reflections, which may be naturally suggested from what we may easily recollect of the rise, progress, and conclusion of the war; reflections, which it may in many instances be pleasant to pursue, and I hope in all profitable to retain.

I. Let us recollect, how much we are obliged to the divine goodness, that the late war hath not proved our destruction, or that of our protestant neighbours.

Nothing is more common, than for those who have long been pampered with the blessings of peace, in the height of their spirits, to plunge themselves into war with a kind of wanton confidence, like that with which *The horse rushes into the battle* *: But the issue has been so frequent, that it grew into a proverb many ages ago, *They who take the sword, perish with the sword* †. Let us adore the divine goodness, that Great-Britain is not added to the instances which illustrate it. It is the more reasonable particularly to acknowledge it, considering how ill we were provided with some kind of preparations, and how destitute of alliances when the war with Spain broke out; and how deplorably, I will not pretend to say by what sad fatality, we have since been disappointed in our expectations from some, who were most evidently joined with us in a community of public interest, had public interest been duly understood or regarded.

But it is sufficient to have hinted at this. Let me rather call back your thoughts this day to the storm that hung over us, when France was preparing for so formidable an invasion, and God *Blew with his wind and* scattered *them* ‡, and strewed their own shores with the wreck of those ships and men, which had been armed for our destruction; an event, the importance of which there were few that then thoroughly understood, though what since happened opened the view more distinctly upon us. I here refer to that bold attempt, then concerted, and quickly after made, by the enemies of Britain at home, in concurrence with those abroad. And let me now more solemnly recall to your remembrance that day of alarm and consternation, when a little spring from the Northern mountains, which seemed in its rise beneath our notice, and was unhappily too much despised, swelled on a sudden into a torrent, that deluged half our land: When battalions of desperate and infatuated

* Jer. viii. 6. † Mat. xxvi. 52. ‡ Exod. xv. 10.

men, having consecrated their swords to our destruction, in blood ever to be lamented, bent on completing the ruin of their country, came pouring on us with such savage fury and unrestrained impetuosity; till it pleased God, according to the language in which he speaks of the proud Assyrian, to *Put a hook into their nose, and a bridle into their jaws,* to *turn them back by the way which they came* *, even like him to their own land, that they might perish there. Dwell, Sirs, on an idea, which I hope is already familiar to your mind, and ought for ever to be retained. Do you not even now tremble to think, what the consequence would probably have been, if those westerly winds which blew almost continually during the same season of the last year, had then been commissioned to detain our forces on the continent? What an æra had that been in the British history! What a spectacle to Europe! What a lamentation to ages unborn! But God wafted over to us speedy deliverance, so that not a company was kept back; nay, I think I may add, hardly a man or a horse miscarried. A deliverance, greatly endeared to us by the hand that brought it, and by the remembrance of those importunate prayers which we had so often presented in the day of our distress. Pursue the reflection, and let your hearts this day feel anew the tender and lively gratitude, which you owe to God, and to your human protectors.

It becomes us also this day most thankfully to recollect, in what undisturbed tranquility we have generally lived, during this ten year's war; *Sitting* as in the profoundest peace *under our own vines and fig-trees* †; as entire strangers to those grievous desolations and horrid spectacles, which so many thousands of our neighbours have known, as if no sword had ever been unsheathed. We immediately owe it to the vigilance of our governors, and the advantages of our situation, in concurrence with the strength of our navy, and the conduct, courage and fidelity of those to whom the command of it was intrusted, and which the contrary character and behaviour of some in their station has, alas, too unhappily illustrated: But let us remember, that the governors, the situation, the navy, the commanders, in which we rejoice, are the gifts of a kind providence, and are to be acknowledged as such. Let the safety of Britain and its provinces, in consequence of all, be the subject of our repeated and continued thanksgivings. Nor let us be so unfeeling for the protestant interest in general, so forgetful of former benefits, so insensible even of our own present and future security,

* Isa. xxxvii. 29. † Mic. iv. 4.

as not to rejoice, that our allies, and especially the united provinces, have shared with us in the rescue God has been pleased to give us. Let us adore the Almighty, that those *prayers* for their safety, which we had so much reason to unite with those for our own, have appeared to *come up in remembrance before God*; so that they are indeed *As a brand plucked out of the burning* *. *Praise waiteth for thee, Oh God, in* our *Zion*, on all these accounts; *and unto thee* may *our vows be performed* †! the vows which we made when we were in trouble and perplexity, and *Lifted up our eyes unto thee, from whom our help cometh*, even to *the God that made heaven and earth* ‡. But amidst all the joy which these reflections may afford,

II. Let us humble ourselves in the review of those rebukes of providence, which we experienced during the series of the late war.

I question, whether modern history§ can produce an instance, in which a war has been entered into with more towering hopes, with more anticipated triumph, than that which we proclaimed against Spain; and probably, the wisest men amongst us thought that confidence no very good omen of our success. We seemed to think, we had nothing to do but to gird on our terrors, and make the earth tremble. As if, according to the beautiful manner in which Isaiah describes the pride of the Assyrian, we might at pleasure go to the nations that had offended us, as securely and irresistibly as to the *Nest* of some little insignificant bird, and *gather their riches, as one gathereth eggs that are left, and there should be none to move the wing, or to open the mouth, or to peep* ‖. But the event proved very different: We found, there was such a thing as military prudence, and strength, and bravery among our enemies, as well as among ourselves: And after all the vain parade with which we set out, we returned, in repeated instances, disappointed and ashamed; so as to have evident reason, after such vast preparations, and such presumptuous confidence, to apply to several of our projects and attempts the words of Israel by the same prophet, *We have been with child, we have been in pain; we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the*

* Amos iv. 11. † Psal. lxv. 1. ‡ Psal. cxxi. 1, 2.

§ I say modern history, as I must allow the triumphant confidence with which the Athenians sent out their navy and troops to the unfortunate Sicilian war against Syracuse, where they were so deplorably destroyed, to be an ever memorable exception, and so far as I can recollect, an event unparalleled in its kind. See Thucyd. page 430—432. Diod. Sic. Lib. xiii. & Roll. Hist. Anc. L. viii. C. 8.

‖ Isa. x. 14.

*earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen* before us*. For succeeding years during our war with France, though the British soldiery to their immortal honour behaved so bravely, we heard not of one battle gained, of one town taken by us or our allies, on the continent; while on the other hand, we received repeated information of actions, in which we had greatly the disadvantage, and in which victory was snatched out of our hands by accidents so vexatious, that they are not, even at this distance, to be named; and of fine towns, more than memory can number, lost to the enemy almost as fast as their forces could march from one of them to another, some without any resistance, and most of the rest with only a feint of defence.

These, Sirs, are mortifying, but they are indisputable truths; and they must stand upon record, not indeed to the shame of our forces or our generals, but for the instruction of generations to come, that *With good advice* they may *make war*†; and that, how well soever the measures of it may seem to be concerted, they may not, while *Girding on their harness, boast as if they were putting it off*‡. I know, that by the war some particular interests have been largely advanced, and many considerable advantages for commerce, while we remained so incontestably masters of the ocean, gained, which to those concerned in them have more than balanced their share in the public expence: But I cannot imagine, that had the nation distinctly foreseen all the consequences, they would have engaged in it with the eagerness they did, when I suppose the whole gain that can be set down at the foot of the account, to balance the loss of so many thousand lives, and so many millions of treasure, is this, that some of our neighbours are perhaps more exhausted than we, and are less able, should they immediately attempt it, to make themselves terrible to the liberties of Europe. On the whole, just as our cause, and upright and strenuous as our measures were, it appears to have been the scheme of providence, to save Great Britain from sinking into ruin, rather than to exalt it: And we have much greater reason to wonder, when we consider our circumstances in comparison with our characters, that ruin was averted, than that so few memorable advantages were gained, or some sensible inconveniences incurred. In these views,

III. Let us acknowledge the divine interposition, which facilitated so equitable a peace as that which we this day celebrate.

* Isa. xxvi. 18. †Prov. xx. 18. ‡1 Kings xx. 11.

I shall not enter into any large discourse on the blessings of peace in general; since, how proper soever it may be to recollect them at present, the subject is trite, and many of the most material thoughts which might illustrate it, sufficiently obvious. But I would hint at some things, which are peculiar to the present occasion. I am persuaded, distant posterity will wonder, that so equitable a treaty should take place, when they consider a variety of attending circumstances, and compare them with the great rapidity and extent of the French conquests, and the evident superiority with which they threatened the low countries, and by a necessary consequence Britain itself, and all its allies. To suppose this to have been owing to some sudden change in the spirits of men, moderating their ambitious views, and assuaging their thirst of plunder and of empire, would increase rather than abate the wonder; and there are incidents by which, on very different principles, the change of measures may be accounted for; but they are such as still leave room to say, especially when compared with each other, that it *Is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes**.

In this view we shall naturally think of our late successes at sea, in the first place; whereby the designs of hostile powers were rendered abortive, and those naval preparations which were intended to ruin our colonies, were led home in triumph to our own shores, and made at length to pour that vengeance on themselves, which they had meditated against us; whilst the opportunity which our maritime force gave us of cutting off their trade, and at the same time of extending our own, added strength to the sinews of war amongst us, which it weakened amongst them. Nor are we to consider that ever memorable series of providence which gave Cape Breton into our hands, as insignificant to this end. For though important reasons obliged the government to restore it, it is certain, the possession which we actually had of so valuable a jewel of the French crown must add great weight to our negotiations, and equitably intitle us to many advantages which we might not otherwise have been able to obtain: Not to say what influence our having so long held it, and intimately known its state, connexions, and dependances, may have on settling and conducting that colony to our adjacent province of Nova Scotia, which under the divine blessing, to which I hope we shall fervently recommend it, may be productive of signal advantages, and prove an happy equivalent for what it has been necessary to resign.

* Psal. cxviii. 23.

In these things *the arm of the Lord* hath been *made bare;* and lest the part which we ourselves have had in them, should make us less sensible of it, God hath been pleased to interpose in other instances, where we could pretend to no share of glory. In this view, besides what I said of the renewed wonders of providence in so favourable a disposition of the winds*, we have great reason to reflect on the scarcity of provisions in France, while we were enriched with plenty, for many successive years. And though in the mean time distempers reigned among our horned cattle, yet, blessed be God, never to such a degree as in some neighbouring countries, where various provisions were raised to almost three times their former value. And the fertility of our sheep, as well as of our lands, while our kine have been visited and afflicted, is never to be reflected upon without grateful acknowledgment; as it hath not only moderated the price of our food, but furnished us abundantly for those manufactures, the trade of which has been carried on extensively abroad, so much to our national advantage; in consequence of which, we have been much better able to support the necessary expence of the war. And this has taught our enemies to look upon us, not as an exhausted ruined people, but as those who had still resources sufficient to render them formidable, and whom it was not their interest to provoke to the last extremities.

I am indeed sensible, there are some, who being themselves surrounded with all the blessings of plenty, and attentive only to accidental personal advantages, or to the happy consequences which might have attended some successful action on the seas, or in the field, at a crisis like that which has lately occurred, regret the pacification in which we are this day called to rejoice. But such should temper these sanguine views, by remembering, how possible it was that another action might have been unsuccessful to us and our allies, and how dreadful the consequences of this must have been to the public cause, and even to Britain itself; whose army might then probably have been utterly cut off, and whose naval strength might not have been able to have defended it, if the wealth and shipping of Holland had fallen into the hand that was stretched out over them. The view indeed is so affecting, that it is painful to dwell upon it: and one trembles to think of casting the die for so deep a stake, had the chance been more equal than it seems to have been. But one of the first unhappy events which might have attended

* See some illustration of the expression here used, in my sermon, preached on the Fast Day, 1738-9, and a much fuller in that excellent pamphlet, called Britain's Remembrancer.

the risk, leads us to reflect on that signal interposition of heaven, which, in the hour of extremity, and with a hand conspicuous to the whole world, raised the house of Orange to such distinguished dignity and power; whereby the strength of the Low Countries is drawn into a point, and a steadiness and weight is given to their councils, which will render them respectable in the eyes of all Europe, and must surely put it out of the power of any neighbouring states, to traverse our interest in them, and to deprive us of their important assistance, if future emergencies should arise. From this surprising event, with many others which have occurred of late years,

IV. Let us take occasion to reflect on the vanity of human ambition.

Some of its fatal effects we immediately saw; and I persuade myself, the hostilities which were exchanged between us and our neighbours, could not so far steel our hearts against all sentiments of humanity, as that we should not tenderly regret on their side, as well as on our own, the many sacrifices which were made to that merciless dæmon. And who must not now be struck, to observe how it has repaid its votaries! We may hope, it will be a lesson of wisdom, moderation, and justice, to distant nations, and to future ages, when they hear and read, how, after so vast an expence of blood and treasure, after so many fine provinces harrassed, so many rich cities plundered, so many thousands and myriads slain in their prime, the consequence of all should be, to quit what had been thus violently usurped, with this only consolation, or little but this, that the places through which the sanguinary procession had passed, were left less populous, less beautiful, less opulent, than they had been found, and that perhaps a day had ruined what nature and art had been years in forming. Can we imagine, that if France could have foreseen, how France would have been lacerated, chastised, and exhausted, not to say in many instances disgraced, it would have purchased the disquiet of Flanders, of Germany, of Italy, of Britain, at so dear a rate? Surely it would be unjust to suspect that, or any nation under heaven, of so much disinterested malevolence. But, as in the instance of Edom, it may justly be said, *The pride of their heart hath deceived them;*—and *the men of their confederacy*, the auxiliary forces on which they so much relied, *have* only *brought them* back *to their* own impoverished *border**. The river rose with impetuosity, and deluged the

* Obad. ver. 3, 7.

lands on either side; it bore down their ornaments, and their wealth, into a sea of destruction; and now its force and fury are spent, it runs, not unsullied, within its former channel.

While we reflect upon this, and perhaps suppress in our minds some of those reflections which will naturally arise upon it, let us pray, that wiser and more equitable, as well as more benevolent, measures and principles may prevail among the rulers of the earth. And let us rejoice, that the counsels of Britain, and the conduct of that generous prince who presides over them, may teach the nations honour and good faith. The glory of our sovereign in this respect must be the joy and boast of his people, far beyond what the trophies of conquest could yield: And it must give a satisfaction, not to be paralleled by any little momentary advantages which a contrary conduct might promise, that posterity will testify for his Britannic Majesty, how religiously his treaties have been observed, and his engagements fulfilled; in consequence of which his throne has stood firm against all efforts to shake it, supported by the grateful affection of a free people, supported above all by the omnipotent guardian of justice and truth.

V. Let the scenes through which we have passed, teach us to value and cultivate peace at home.

The public virtues of a prince take off very much from the merit of loyalty; and in an assembly like this, I need not urge, how much those of ours would increase the infamy of disaffection. May they who need such kind of lessons more, reflect how sadly our dissentions at home have weakened our strength and our importance abroad. Taught by what the common interest has suffered by them, let us exert the utmost influence of our examples, our persuasions, and our prayers, to unite all around us in attachment to our illustrious king and his family, and in unfeigned love to each other. And Oh that he, whose powerful influence alone can effect it, would so subdue every unkind suspicion and unfriendly prejudice, as to promote our civil and ecclesiastical union in degrees which have been hitherto unknown! A civil and political union seems so easy under a government like ours, that one would wonder any should oppose it, who have not some unnatural antipathy to liberty and prosperity, or whose desperate circumstances and characters do not apparently give them an interest in the confusion of the public. In religious affairs, mistaken principles conscientiously admitted and retained may create mutual difficulties, which may embarrass the most faithful and affectionate counsellors of peace; not to say, how far secular interest may, in some cases, increase

the embarrassment. But let us humbly look up to that universally acknowledged, but alas almost as universally neglected, head of the church, to whose all-healing energy no evils are incurable; that he may diffuse those gentle but powerful influences of the spirit of love, which may effectually prevent our reviling or suspecting, our judging and despising each other. As for us, while under an unwilling necessity of continuing separate from our brethren, may we use thankful, peaceful, and unenvied, the liberty which the laws of God and man allow! and may growing experience more fully teach protestants of every denomination, *How good and pleasant it is for brethren*, though perhaps in different habits and assemblies, *to dwell together in unity**; how much beauty, and pleasure, and strength, are added to the community, when it is cemented by such bonds! Which leads me to a yet more extensive reflection,

VI. Let what has passed, teach us to conduct ourselves, and all under our influence, by such rules of prudence and virtue, as may have a natural tendency to increase our national strength.

I would not cloud the festivity of a day, like this, by any thing which might appear an inauspicious insinuation as to the peace so lately established: May it be as lasting, as it is welcome to any who are concerned in it; and may providence give our children's children to rejoice in its happy consequences! But we know, that all human affairs are uncertain; and it cannot easily be forgotten, that the peace with France towards the end of king William's reign, and that with Spain towards the end of queen Anne's, did neither of them continue seven years. It is however evident, that nothing will tend more to perpetuate this pacification, than our being so provided against a contrary event, that none of our neighbours may find it their interest, if by a fatal relapse it should be their inclination, to disturb us.

There are natural and political precautions to be taken for this purpose, which will undoubtedly be the care of our governors, and concerning the particulars of which none but they who have the management of public affairs can competently judge: But there are others, and those on the whole not less important, which are of such a nature, as well becomes the teachers of religion to recommend and enforce; I mean, the cultivating those moral dispositions, without which we may ven-

* Psal. cxxxiii. 1.

ture to say, that none other can have a sufficient efficacy for the general safety.

And here no thought more readily occurs, than the necessity of endeavouring to curb that taste for luxury and pleasurable expence, which has done so much to enervate, disgrace, and impoverish us. One would imagine, that the degree to which our finances must necessarily have been exhausted during so long and expensive a war, should enforce a prudent frugality on all who have any regard for the public good. But instead of this, were we to judge from the glaring objects which every where strike us, a considerate man would be tempted to suspect, that the whole nation, if it acted on any scheme at all, was fallen into the unhappy artifice whereby so many particular persons have been undone; I mean, that of fancying a credit may be established among their neighbours, by making a gay figure, when there is least to support it. True prudence would certainly teach us, to endeavour to retrieve our affairs, while there is a possibility of doing it, by imposing on ourselves those sumptuary laws, if I may be allowed the expression, which the indulgence of our superiors spares us; that a vain parade, and an excessive delicacy in the articles of food and dress, of furniture and equipage, may not melt down our spirits, and increase our necessities; and so make us the more accessable to corruption, the more averse to those labours and dangers, which if we know not how resolutely to face, we shall in consequence of that be forced to meet, and perhaps the sooner when we turn our backs upon an enemy to avoid them.

Permit me farther to observe, of how great importance it is, that a wise and steady care be taken in the education of youth, that they may be *Trained up in the way in which they should go* *; a care to form them betimes, to strenuous resolution and industry, to activity and self-denial, to reverence for laws and obedience to just and equitable government, and in a word, to every generous sentiment with regard to the public good and the liberty of their country; that they may take an honest pleasure and pride, if I may be permitted to say it, in sacrificing to that every personal interest which may seem to oppose it. The more elevated and distinguished the station of any one in question may be, the more important will these precautions be found, and the more solicitously should such principles be inculcated: But even in lower life this care is necessary; that if those whose prerogative it is to set the fashion should

* Prov. xxii. 6.

fail, as amidst their strong temptations they so generally do, all may not be carried away by the torrent.

The like consideration calls us, to exert ourselves for the execution of those wholesome laws, which are enacted for the suppression of profaneness and vice, but which are so frequently violated, and audaciously insulted. Associations of worthy and public spirited men are in this view very desirable; especially for restraining that licentiousness, which if not carried into an army, is so frequently brought out of it, even where it has in the main been well disciplined; and which in civil life, to which disbanded soldiers must return, is pregnant with many grievous and fatal consequences.

I might enlarge here; but these are hints of advice, easily suggested by one destitute of all religion, and which no prudent atheist would oppose or neglect. It becomes the servants of the living God, the ministers of the everlasting gospel, to lead your thoughts much farther on such an occasion: I must therefore add,

VII. Let us all be engaged by the survey we have been taking, to repose ourselves on God, and to seek his protection and favour in the way he has graciously appointed.

We well know him to be the great Disposer of all events, who *Speaks* at pleasure, with an efficacious voice, *concerning a nation*, as well as a family, *to plant, or pluck up, to build or destroy it* *. Our highest wisdom must therefore consist in securing his favour, by a most grateful reception of his gospel, and a faithful and constant compliance with its great and blessed design. And indeed it is, as the apostle insinuates, absolutely necessary, that *virtue* should be grafted on *faith* † in order to its flourishing. Permit me therefore this day, solemnly to renew the exhortation I have so often given you, that you submit to the authority of the word, and of the Son of God, and that you endeavour religiously to conform yourselves to the christian institution; acting as in the presence of that holy majesty of heaven, who registers all our actions, and penetrates our hearts; feeling at all times the deepest and most affectionate sense of your infinite obligations to redeeming grace; and considering yourselves as continually on the borders of an eternal state, where happiness or misery awaits you complete and perpetual. These are motives and considerations, suited to produce that consistency, that uniformity, that elevation of goodness, which must never be expected on any other foundation.

* Jer. xviii. 7, 9. † 2 Pet. i. 5.

And what glorious hopes might we not form for our dear country, if sentiments like these were generally to prevail! "Oh Britain, thou nation *saved* and favoured *of the Lord!* If God hath so powerfully rescued thee again and again, plunged as thou art into so many excesses and enormities; if *his arm* has been thus *made bare* in thy defence, whilst many who boast the most ancient hereditary honours, or whose atchievments for their country's good have ennobled their line, deem it no stain to their greatness, to shew their contempt of religion, and to teach every rank below them, to profane his sabbaths, to neglect his ordinances, or to affront them yet more by their irreverent attendance, and by every other method to dishonour and outrage that tremendous name, which is the awe of heaven, and the terror of hell;—if he not only spare, but by signal interpositions deliver and bless thee, while profaneness and riot walk through thy villages and cities uncontrolled, and almost unreproved too; and so many of thy watchmen themselves sleep over their charge, where they do not by false principles or scandalous examples cause their people to err,—what mightest thou not expect were a general reformation to prevail! What prosperity, what felicity would not attend thee, if thy princes and thy nobles appeared indeed to reverence the God of heaven, if his sabbaths were religiously observed, his name honoured, his worship devoutly celebrated, in the family as well as in the sanctuary; if pastors, to the strength of argument and the fervour of exhortation, *Publickly and from house to house* *, added the sanction of a blameless, a holy, an edifying example; and in consequence of this there were a general solicitude in those under their ministry, however they varied in opinions and in forms, to unite in *Adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things* †!"

Surely the consequence must be, that a nation thus truly christian, though far less distinguished by natural advantages than ours, would appear at once amiable and awful; or in Solomon's sublime language, *Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners* ‡. Our neighbours would revere us; our God would protect us, and shower down his blessings upon us; the blessings of peace and plenty, which being traced up to their true source, being also moderately used, and equitably and generously distributed to those that were real and proper objects of compassion, would be far sweeter than ever. When our counsellors were faithful, and

* Acts xx. 20. † Tit. ii. 10. ‡ Cant. vi. 10.

knew no interest of their own to be compared with that of the public; when our leaders, like that excellent man who so lately fell in our defence, *feared to sin but not to die* *; and there was in the breast of every soldier a calm resignation to the will of God, a noble ambition of securing his approbation, a well grounded confidence in his favour, whether for time or eternity; what could we reasonably dread? Surely, bad as the world is, the enemies of such a people would be few; and God, their guardian, would make such enemies to know that *He who touched them, touched the apple of his eye* †.

Whose heart does not kindle at such a representation? Who that loves his country, would not form the most ardent wishes, that this may be its character, and its felicity? May the repose God hath been pleased to give us, be subservient to this blessed end! and now that our public counsellors are eased of many burdens which the exigencies and operations of the war must occasion, may their thoughts be directed to the happiest measures, whereby immoralities may be farther curbed, and pure, genuine, catholic christianity most effectually promoted and established among us! And may they who stand in the first rank of the ministers of Christ, be animated to lead the way, with a courage, magnanimity, and zeal, which may transmit their names with glory to the remotest ages, and through the grace of the gospel entitle them to more distinguished honours in the church above, than any constitution or prince upon earth can confer!

To conclude all, the mention of what in this connection may easily present itself to our mind,

VIII. Let the occasion of this day's assembly lead our thoughts to that universal peace of the church, which we expect in the latter day, and to the complete peace of the heavenly world.

How delightful is it to think, that whatever blemishes we for the present lament in churches, whatever desolations in states and kingdoms, there is a time approaching when all shall be remedied; a glorious long expected time, for the manifestation of which *The whole creation* seems to *travail* and be *in pain* ‡; when *The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover* the channel of *the sea* §, and the world shall learn by happy experience, what christianity is, and what the invaluable blessings with which it is pregnant. Let us

* See Col. Gardiner's Life, §. 11. † Zech. ii. 8.
‡ Rom. viii. 22. § Hab. ii. 14.

cheer our hearts with the lovely and glorious prospect of that day of grand and final pacification, when, once for all, those who have been armed for the destruction of each other, *Shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks*, when *nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more* *, having so cordially learnt the gospel of peace. Glorious period, when the religion of Jesus shall universally prevail over the whole human race, and disarm their fierce passions, and regulate their exorbitant desires, and inspire the most benevolent and generous sentiments! When men shall regard their fellow-men of all nations as their brethren, and desire to see all around them as happy as themselves; forgetting, with a nobleness of heart which nothing but the gospel of Christ can inspire, every personal, yea I will add, every national interest, which appears inconsistent with the happiness of the whole human species!

But *Who shall live, when God doth this* †? When this great miracle shall close the scene of wonders, which the christian revelation has opened? Probably a distant generation, by whom our names shall be forgotten, though the event itself be as certain as the divine oracles can render it. We will at least, with the first-fruits of a temper which shall then so universally prevail, rejoice in the expected happiness of those, who shall not so much as know that we ever existed.

And if some regard to personal engagements will, as it is so natural and so just, mingle themselves with sentiments like these, let me on this good occasion call your thoughts to the much nearer and more important prospects of the eternal world; prospects, which I hope are familiar to the minds of many among us, and to which so many sad spectacles as daily present themselves here, concur to lead us. It is painful to a truly benevolent spirit, especially to one who considers the remoter consequences of things, to look round on what is generally the state of the present world, and to look back on the history of mankind in preceding times, ancient or modern. There is no branch of science, with respect to which it may be so truly said, *He who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow* ‡ in proportion to it. In this respect, they seem to have the greatest advantage, who know only the story of their own personal and domestic afflictions, and those of a little circle of near neighbours. Yet so is our nature constituted, that we delight and wish to know, how it fares, and has fared with others, though at the expence

* Isa. ii. 4. † Num. xxiv. 23. ‡ Eccl. i. 18.

of a sad sympathy: But it is most comfortable to reflect, that where God has given such a sensibility of heart founded on true principles of piety and charity, he hath appointed, that the soul in which it dwells should not long inherit the infirmities and sorrows of human flesh, nor multiply years in the provinces of calamity and misery. He did not send those heaven-born graces down to earth, merely to teach men to weep the tears of humanity, though they have their intermingled sweetness too. Unfeigned universal love shall infallibly be the source of joy. *Yet a little while*, and God will draw a veil over all these mournful spectacles; or rather, he will raise us beyond the view of them, to a high and serene situation, from whence the penetrating eye shall command an ample prospect, beyond the present stretch even of thought, and nothing shall strike it but sights of bliss.

In the mean time, let our eyes be lifted up towards heaven, in humble hope, and in fervent prayer, for the public prosperity, for the prevalency of true christianity in the whole world, especially in our own country; and above all, as it is that in which we are first and most intimately concerned, for its prevalency in our own hearts; that we may steadily retain it, that we may faithfully practise it, that we may daily advance in our conformity to it. So shall *we understand the loving-kindness of the Lord*, in the general conduct of present affairs; and though there may be mysteries of providence which we cannot particularly explain, shall assuredly believe, that *all the paths of it are mercy and truth*, and find the truest and the securest peace in our passage to everlasting joy. Amen.

# A HYMN

SUNG AFTER THE SERMON.

I.

Now let our songs address the God of peace,
Who bids the tumult of the battle cease.
The pointed spears to pruning-hooks he bends,
" And the broad faulchion in the plough-share ends."
His powerful word unites contending nations
In kind embrace and friendly salutations.

II.

Britain, adore the Guardian of thy state;
Who high on his celestial throne elate,
Still watchful o'er thy safety and repose,
Frown'd on the counsels of thy haughtiest foes:
Thy coasts secur'd from ev'ry dire invasion
Of fire and sword, and spreading desolation.

III.

When rebel-bands with desperate madness join'd,
He wafted o'er deliverance with his wind;
Drove back the tide that delug'd half our land,
And curb'd their fury with his mightier hand:
Till dreadful slaughter and the last confusion
Taught those audacious sinners their delusion.

IV.

He gave our fleets to triumph o'er the main,
And scatter terrors 'cross wide ocean's plain;
Opposing leaders trembled at the sight,
Nor found the safety in th' attempted flight:
Taught by their bonds, how vainly they pretended
Those to distress whom Israel's God defended.

V.

Fierce storms were summon'd up in Britain's aid,
And meagre famine hostile lands o'erspread:
By sufferings bow'd, their conquests they release,
Nor scorn the overtures of equal peace.
Contending powers congratulate the blessing,
Joint hymns of gratitude to heaven addressing.

VI.

While we beneath our vines and fig-trees sit,
Or thus within thy sacred temples meet;
Accept, great God, the tribute of our song,
And all the mercies of this day prolong!
Then spread thy peaceful word through every nation,
That all the earth may hail thy great salvation.

# THE GUILT AND DOOM OF CAPERNAUM

*Seriously recommended to the consideration of the Inhabitants of London: A Sermon preached at Salters Hall, August* 20, 1749, *on Occasion of the late Alarm by the second Shock of an Earthquake, March* 8, 1749-50.

## PREFACE.

THIS plain sermon which I now offer to the public, was preached to a very large and attentive auditory, the last Lord's day that I spent in London, from such hints as my many engagements in town would permit me to prepare; and it was delivered, with those genuine marks of deep impression on my own mind, which often do more to command regard to a preacher, than any accuracies of composition. It was judged so suitable to the state of things in that city, by some who had long enjoyed opportunities of knowing it much better than myself, and for whose judgment I had a great regard, that I was immediately desired with some importunity to send it to the press: But I thought I had then sufficient reasons for putting a negative upon that request; especially arising from my desire of dispatching, with all convenient speed, the remaining volumes of the Family Expositor; a work, which having finished in shorthand I am now transcribing for the press, and which I never intermit for one day. But what has so lately passed in London, has renewed such a solicitous concern in my mind for its inhabitants, amongst whom I have so large a number of valuable friends, that it has suggested to me the thought, and after a little deliberation the resolution, of doing that unasked, which before I had resolutely declined.

Considering the lethargic state of so many souls, I have long thought it the prudence of christian ministers, to improve those public alarms, which remarkable providences may excite in the minds of considerable numbers, by renewing those plain and earnest remonstrances, which in calmer life men are so ready to neglect. I doubt not, but whilst I was yesterday representing these things to my own congregation, that many of my brethren in the city, and I look on all the ministers of Christ as my brethren, were wisely availing themselves of the consternation into which so many were thrown on Thursday morning; and that very suitable things were said, of which some will soon be made public. Yet I cannot but hope, that the perusal of what so many hundreds heard, before an earthquake was thought of by them or by me, and when there was nothing uncommon to awaken an attention, may have its peculiar weight. I hope, it will renew the impressions which were formerly made on the hearers, and communicate, as such truths are now so evidently suitable, the like impressions to many more. I know not, that I have myself been more awfully affected with any sermon I have published or preached: I may say in a literal sense, that I have transcribed it *With tears and trembling*,

and that *horror hath taken hold upon me* * in the review of what is here represented. I am not aware of having made any material alteration in the substance of the discourse, especially in its most interesting parts; though I cannot pretend to answer for it, that every sentence is just as it was delivered. But I hope that I shall be excused, if in the remainder of this preface, I add a kind of supplement to the sermon, and address myself to the inhabitants of London, for whom I am under so many obligations to be tenderly concerned, in such a manner as I might have done, had this discourse been delivered among them immediately after that shock, by which I assuredly know that many were thrown into such great and just consternation.

You have now, Sirs, very lately had repeated and surprising demonstrations of the almighty power of that infinite and adorable Being, whom, in the midst of your various hurries and amusements, you are so ready to forget. His hand hath once and again within these five weeks lifted up your mighty city from its basis, and shook its million of inhabitants, in all their dwellings. The palaces of the great, yea even of the greatest, have not been exempted; that the *Princes* of the land might *be wise*, and its *judges* and lawgivers might *receive instruction* †. And is not the voice of this earthquake like that of the *Angel* in the apocalypse, *flying in the midst of heaven, and having the everlasting gospel, saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven and earth* ‡! Who would not indeed fear him, who *Looketh on the earth, and it trembleth* §, and *In whose hand are its deep places* ||!

I suppose what you have so lately felt to be the result of natural causes; but remember, they were causes disposed by him, who from the day in which he founded our island, and laid the foundations of the earth, knew every circumstance of their operation, with infinitely more certainty, than the most skilful engineer the disposition and success of a mine, which he hath prepared and directed, and which he fires in the appointed moment. And do not your hearts *Meditate terror* ¶? Especially when you consider, how much London hath done, and even you yourselves have done, to provoke the eyes of his holiness, and awaken the vengeance of his almighty arm? The second shock was it seems more dreadful than the first; and may not the third be yet more dreadful than the second? So that this last may seem as a merciful signal to prepare—for what may with the most terrible propriety be called an untimely grave indeed; a grave that shall receive the living with the dead! Have you never read of streets, and towns, and cities overthrown in a few moments, and of many thousands of inhabitants great and small, *who have gone down alive into the pit?* And can you be secure, because these horrible devastations have hitherto happened chiefly in more southern climates, that they shall be confined entirely to them? Can any of you be secure, even while you are reading these lines, that the ground may not tremble and reel under you; that the houses already twice shaken within these few weeks, may not even now fall and crush you beneath their ruins? And will any of you go on to forget God, and to make light of that eternal salvation which has so awful a counterpart in eternal destruction? Oh, think of what you have lately felt! And think, whether in that amazing moment you could have done any thing material to prepare for another world, if eternity had depended upon that momentary preparation! A shriek of wild consternation, a cry as you were sinking—the Lord have mercy upon us!—would probably have been of very little significancy to those, that have so long despised mercy, and would not have

* Psal. cxix. 53. † Psal. ii. 10. ‡ Rev. xiv. 6, 7. § Psal. civ. 32.
|| Psal. xcv. 4. ¶ Isa. xxxiii. 18.

thought of asking it but in the last extremity: And yet nothing more could have been expected, in the circumstance we have been supposing.

Let me then beseech those that have neglected religion, to think more attentively of it; and those that trifle in it, more seriously to lay it to heart. Let me beseech the *families that call not upon God's name*, to think how righteously judgment might be commissioned to enter the houses, where prayer cannot, after all the importunity so often used, be admitted as a guest. While yet you seem as it were to feel your whole city moving, let me take so uncommon an opportunity of reminding you all, how important it is to secure *a kingdom that cannot be moved*, to secure everlasting habitations to receive you there, since your dwellings here, how strong and magnificent soever, are thus evidently precarious. I am well aware, that terrors alone are not sufficient to introduce the Lord Jesus Christ, and the efficacy of his gospel, into your hearts: But like the awful ministry of John the Baptist, they may *prepare his way*. An external reformation they may more probably produce; and whatever some may have incautiously asserted to the contrary, I cannot but think, that is one considerable step towards the other. If therefore this alarming convulsion of the earth, which has made your houses totter, may so far shake your hearts, as to procure a remedy to the most crying evils, I shall hope, not only that the farther judgments of God on so sinful a nation may be diverted, but that many who have been *Disobedient to the wisdom of the just*, may be found in the noblest and most important sense a *people prepared unto the Lord* *. We may cheerfully hope it,——if the great will exert themselves to remedy the visible contempt of public and domestic worship, the undisguised violation of the sabbath both at home and abroad, and that licentiousness of behaviour so common among their servants, which generally renders those profligate creatures the shame of their masters houses, the nuisance of the neighbourhood around them, and the scourge and ruin of the families they afterwards form;—If magistrates maintain the decorum of their own characters, and vigorously exert themselves to chastise, and so far as the strenuous execution of the law may effect it, to eradicate those audacious enormities, which seem to glory in a superiority to it; enormities so affronting to God and to our rulers, so infamous to our country, and so pernicious to public order and private safety?——If ministers laying aside those subtil trifles, which so soon evaporate into air, and sometimes generate very noxious vapours, will deal plainly and earnestly with their hearers, as with persons who are daily upon the borders of eternity, and will carry that ardent concern for their salvation, which should always breathe from their pulpits, into the families they visit; If the rising generation be diligently instructed in the genuine principles of religion, guarded against the effeminacy, luxury, and vanity of the age, and inured from tender years to habits of frugality, sobriety, and industry;—In a word, if that eager resort to places of public entertainment, in which so many heads of families are shamefully consuming their time, squandering away their substance, if it be indeed theirs, and daily increasing their disinclination to business, and servitude to pleasure, be forborne by themselves, be forbidden to their dependants.

Would men be persuaded to live like rational creatures, we should be encouraged in our hope of their becoming sincere christians: Would they practise the rules of prudence and virtue, objections against religion would fall off like withered leaves, remonstrances in its favour would be heard with at-

* Luke i. 17.

tention, and our winter would soon be changed into a delightful spring. It is for this purpose, that *The voice of the Lord crieth to the city* *, by these repeated earthquakes, which have so peculiarly affected it, and the sound of which has been so terrible: For this doth it cry to the country, in the grievous distemper that continues to rage among our cattle; in consequence of which so many pastures are desolate, so many industrious families of the poor ruined, and the rich themselves greatly distressed, while their estates are thrown untenanted upon their hands; and considerable landholders in some of the breeding counties, know not where to get beasts for their money to stock them. For these purposes indeed, doth the voice of the Lord in each of these dispensations cry to us all; for neither is the city unconcerned in the interests of the country, nor the country in those of the city: The man of wisdom will hear it; the man of true piety and benevolence will be willing in his proper sphere to echo it back.

The connections in which providence has placed me, and, I would mention it with all humble thankfulness, the unexpected blessing with which God has been pleased to crown some of my writings, have led me to think it my duty to concur with my brethren in this attempt, and to hasten what little I could do in it as much as possible. It may be, that this commotion of the waters may bring some draught under the net of the gospel: It seems at least a time for the *fishers of men* to be active; and if in a day of such general insensibility, peradventure one soul may be caught by this labour of a night, as it is very little more, I shall not esteem it a small matter; for no everlasting interest is small. My work at least is with the Lord, to whom I trust my motives are approved; and my mind could not have been easy, had so remarkable a crisis been entirely neglected by me. I commit it with all humility to the blessing of God, and the prayers of my christian friends, especially of those resident in the city, for whose benefit it was peculiarly intended.

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, March* 12, 1749-50.

* Micah vi. 9.

# SERMON IV.

Mat. xi. 23, 24.—*And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day: But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

DO any of you, Sirs, ask who it is, that speaks in this awful, in this majestic language? Who it is, that menaces a city of Israel with judgments more tremendous than those of Sodom? You may on a little reflection answer yourselves, It is *A prophet mighty in word and deed**, the greatest, beyond all comparison the greatest, of all the prophets, even the Son of God, whose peculiar prerogative it was *To take the book* of the divine decrees *and to open its seals* †. It was he, to whom *Authority was given* to pronounce and *to execute judgment* ‡; from whom Sodom and Capernaum were to receive their final doom, and from whom we also are to expect ours. Let us hear him, as their Judge, and as our own: And oh that this tremendous message may awaken us to implore his favour, may awaken as many of us as are in danger of *The wrath to come*, to flee to him that we may be *delivered from it* §, before *The word* be *gone forth in righteousness* ‖, before the sentence be sealed!

You can none of you imagine the subject I am now proposing to your meditations, unsuitable to the age in which we live, unsuitable to the circumstances of our native country in general, or of the place in which I now stand: But you may perhaps be more fully aware of the suitableness of it, before I come to the close of the discourse.

If a very attentive enquiry has not deceived me, these words were spoken by our Lord, towards the close of the second year of his ministry, that is, between the second and the third of the passovers which occurred during the course of it; a little before he set out on that circuit, for which he sent out the twelve to prepare his way. A very considerable part of his time before this period had been spent in Galilee, and especially in those

* Luke xxiv. 19. † Rev. v. 9. ‡ John v. 27. § 1 Thess. i. 10. ‖ Isa. xlv. 23.

parts of it which were near to the Sea of Tiberias. On this occasion Chorazin and Bethsaida had been frequently blessed with his presence; but Capernaum had been distinguished from all the rest by this inestimable privilege, as you will afterwards hear, it is no wonder therefore, that he thought proper to upbraid all these cities for their continued unbelief and impenitency; and that Capernaum which had been so distinguished by the favours he had conferred upon it, should be threatened with distinguished calamity and ruin. *He began to upbraid the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not; Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes: But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.* This was saying much; but as the privileges of Capernaum had been still greater, its doom is yet more awful: *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day: But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee*.* In which words it may be proper for us to consider,

I. The privileges Capernaum had enjoyed, and the distinctions which had been made in its favour.

II. Its ungrateful abuse of these distinguised favours of providence and of grace.

III. The dreadful doom which it righteously incurred by that abuse. And after the survey of these particulars, we shall

Conclude with a few hints of plain and serious application.

And you men of Britain, and inhabitants of London, judge I pray you this day between Christ and Capernaum; and say, whether there was any unjust severity in the sentence he passed upon it. Hear attentively, and judge impartially; but take heed, lest while you judge others, you condemn yourselves. Let us consider,

I. The privileges Capernaum had enjoyed, and the distinctions which had been made in its favour.

And here I would observe, It had been distinguished by temporal advantages,—but much more, by spiritual privileges and opportunities.

* Mat. xi. 20, 21, 22.

1. It had been distinguished by the temporal advantages of a rich and flourishing city.

Such we are told it was; and in this sense it was *Exalted unto heaven;* a phrase, by which the *greatness* of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is described *.

The land of Israel in general, was a rich and pleasant land, which the all-surveying eye of God *Had spied out* †, as he himself expresses it, for his favourite people: And this elegant city lay upon the confines of Zebulon, and of Napthali; concerning the former of which tribes it was foretold, that it should *Suck of the abundance of the sea, and the treasures hid in the sand* ‡; and concerning the latter, that it should *Be satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord* §; possessing by this situation the west and the south, though it lay towards the north-east part of the land. A prophecy remarkably verified by those advantages which Jordan and the sea of Galilee gave it, for maintaining a commerce with those parts. It lay also in the near neighbourhood of *Asher*, of whom it was predicted, that *his bread should be fat*, that *he should yield royal dainties* ||, *And dip his feet in oil* ¶.

And what is particularly worthy of our present notice, Capernaum was situated in the land of Gennesareth, one of the most delicious spots of ground in the whole Jewish territories. Josephus has given us a very particular description of it, which shews how properly that tract of land had the name of Gennesareth, which may well signify the pardon of a prince, according to the import of *gen sar*, from whence it seems to be derived: For he tells us **, "That it was plentifully watered by a most delicious spring, that went by the name of Capernaum, and every thing flourished about it: The air seemed, not only to nourish, but to preserve the fruits produced there, so that there were figs and grapes for ten months in the year, and other kind of fruits all the year round; and by a very peculiar felicity, nuts, palms, and figs, and olives, though they required generally a very different situation, all abounded there in great plenty."

To this we may add, that it had also some particular advantages for commerce, being situated, according to the most accurate geographer, near that mouth of Jordan, by which it emptied itself into the sea of Galilee; the city of Capernaum

* Dan. iv. 22. † Ezek. xx. 6. ‡ Deut. xxxiii. 19. § Ver. 23. || Gen. xlix. 20. ¶ Deut. xxxiii. 24. ** Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 10. § 8.

lying on its western shore, as Chorazin its opposite neighbour did on its eastern. In consequence of this, it would lie directly in the way of those, who came from Damascus, and Cæsarea Philippi to Jerusalem and the southern parts of the country; or of those that went from thence, to those very celebrated cities, and others in their much frequented neighbourhood.

It is therefore no wonder, if with all these advantages it became a very flourishing place; no wonder, if its buildings were magnificent, its inhabitants rich, its gardens delicious, and its manners polite; no wonder, if they that dwelt in Capernaum thought, *The lines were fallen to them in pleasant places* *. They had special reason to do so, if we consider,

2. How much more eminently it was distinguished by spiritual privileges.

It had, we find, its synagogues for public worship; but what was its peculiar glory, it had Jesus to preach in them, and to confirm his doctrine by wonderful works. There is hardly a place in the whole land, except it be Jerusalem, of which we read so much in the account which the evangelists have given us of our Saviour's life. *He went down to Capernaum*, with his *mother, and brethren, and disciples* †, and continued there a while, in the very opening of his ministry, after he had turned the water into wine at the neighbouring town of Cana in Galilee. It is not improbable, he took it in his way from Judea to Nazareth, when he was returning from his first passover; and we are expressly told, that *Leaving Nazareth*, when so base and ungrateful an attempt was made upon his life there, *he came and dwelt in Capernaum* ‡. And though he left that place quickly after, when importuned to stay, that he might pursue his business in other parts of *Galilee* §; yet when that circuit was done, he returned thither *again* ‖, continuing there as it seems till his second passover. We find him in that neighbourhood again, presently after that passover ¶; and such was his love to it, that notwithstanding the impenitence he here laments, he afterwards visited it again and again**.

During these repeated sojournings amongst them, we may assure ourselves, that he gave them the most excellent instructions, *Preaching repentance, as the kingdom of heaven was approaching* ††. We know, that *He spake as never man spake* ‡‡; and here no doubt, as every where else, his words

* Psal. xvi. 6. † John ii. 12. ‡ Mat. iv. 13. § Mark i. 37—39.
‖ Mark ii. 1. ¶ Luke vii. 1. ** Luke viii. 41. Mark vi. 1. John vi. 59.
†† Mat. iv. 17. ‡‡ John vii. 46.

were as awful, as they were gracious and endearing. We likewise know, that his instructions were every where illustrated by the commanding force of a most amiable, and in him a most perfect example. And to all this, to the discourses he delivered, and the consummate pattern which he gave of universal goodness, was added the weight of many most astonishing miracles; with reference to which it seems, that no other place was equally distinguished.

The wonderful works which Christ had done at Capernaum, are spoken of by himself, as known to all the inhabitants of Nazareth; who were therefore ready to say, *Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thine own country* *: And many more were done after that. *At Capernaum* he healed the nobleman's son †, while he was himself at a distance in Cana: At Capernaum he *Cast out a devil* ‡ in the public synagogue on a sabbath day. At Capernaum he cured *Peter's wife's mother of a fever* §: At Capernaum they brought to him *All that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils* ‖; yea, *All that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them* ¶: At Capernaum it was, that *The power of the Lord was present to heal* great numbers, before the *Pharisees and doctors of the law, who were come* thither *out of every town of Galilee and Judea* ** to a place which was become so illustrious: And it was here, and in the midst of this assembly, that he cured the *Paralytic*, who was let down by cords into the place, to which they could get no other access but from the *top of the house* ††: It was here also at Capernaum, that he cured *The Centurion's servant* ‡‡, before he came under the roof where he was: And in another visit, some time after these words in the text were spoken, it was here that he cured the *Woman* by the *touch of his garment*, and *raised the daughter of Jairus to life* §§.

This is a brief and imperfect view of the advantages Capernaum enjoyed: How justly therefore with respect to these might it be said, it was *exalted unto heaven!* How reasonably might it have been expected then, that Capernaum, thus divinely taught, thus miraculously relieved, should have been remarkable for its diligent attention to the doctrines of our Lord,

* Luke iv. 23. † John iv. 46, & seq. ‡ Mark i. 23—26. § Ver. 30, 31.
‖ Ver. 32. ¶ Luke iv. 40. ** Luke v. 17. †† Ver. 18—26.
‡‡ Luke vii. 1—10. §§ Luke viii. 41, & seq.

and its ready obedience to his gospel! But alas, we cannot forget the connection in which these advantages have been surveyed; and it must be the business of our next general, to consider,

II. The abuse of these privileges; for wretchedly abused they were.

It is expressly said here, that *They repented not* *: Which implies,—that many sins were to be found among them;—and that they would not be reformed under all the endeavours which the Son of God himself thought proper to use for that purpose.

1. It is certain, that many sins were to be found among them.

They could not otherwise have stood in such need of repentance, as to have been obnoxious to so dreadful a sentence for their impenitence. Guilty they undoubtedly were of many evils, but we cannot certainly pronounce as to the particulars: Probably they were such as are commonly to be found in opulent and elegant cities, where the materials of luxury abound, and temptations to it are multiplied.

We may reasonably suppose, that irreligion led on the train here, as it does wherever iniquity abounds. Perhaps the worship of God, might be neglected, and that neglect lay at the door of every other evil and enormity. The synagogues might be unfrequented, especially by the rich and the great; unless when curiosity drew them thither, on the same principles as those on which it might have drawn them to a theatre: And though the terrors of the law that hung over their heads, might prevent that breach of the sabbath, which it pronounced a capital offence, yet it is highly probable, that it might be a day of idleness and diversion, and in no other view might be *Called a delight* †; so that being perverted from its original purpose, it turned into an occasion of mischief, rather than of benefit, and left them more sensual and vicious than it found them.

Perhaps, amidst their many *Merchants, the balances of deceit* might be *in their hands* ‡; the arts of dishonest gain might be practised, till every sense of their infamy was lost, amidst the numbers by which they were countenanced; till their palaces were cemented by the tears of oppressed widows and orphans, *The stone crying out of the wall, and the beam from the timber answering it* §.

* Mat. xi. 20. † Isa. lviii. 13. ‡ Hos. xii. 7. § Hab. ii. 11.

More certainly still may we reckon upon it, that the fatal arts of luxury reigned in Capernaum: Ostentatious ornaments of dress and furniture, exquisite food, rich wines, and not improbably, concerts of music and other theatrical entertainments, which we know Herod introduced into some of their cities, drawing the world after them, and employing the great, when their minds should have been occupied about the affairs of the public; perhaps too intoxicating those in common life, and leading them to forget the cares and interrupt the labours, upon which their own subsistence and that of their families depended, and so bringing upon their families a ruin that would not have so much as the consolation of being pitied; at once exhausting the substance, and corrupting the taste of the rising generation. Wretched offspring of cruelly-indulgent parents! who instead of being trained up in the fear of the Lord, in the methods of a wise, virtuous, and pious education, might have their minds broken by effeminacy, and a thousand artificial wants created, when perhaps there might hardly be enough left from the ravages of luxury, to supply the necessities of nature. They would no doubt grow up exorbitant, petulant, and audacious; ignorant of every art but that of corrupting and injuring others, of every science but that of deriding the little remainder of religion and virtue, that might be found in the midst of so general a wreck. Alas, what an inheritance laid up for them! But whatever the offences of Capernaum were, it is to be remembered,

2. That they would not reform under all the efforts which Christ used with them for that purpose.

The Son of God himself was among them; *A wise Reprover*, but it was *on disobedient ears* *. Neither his remonstrances, nor his example, nor his miracles, would make any lasting impression upon them. Perhaps there were those, who would not condescend to give him the hearing: They thought themselves wise and polite in looking with contempt upon the man of Nazareth, and would not give themselves the trouble of enquiring into what seemed to them so incredible a tale, as that of his miracles; or if the evidence forced itself upon their minds, and laid down certain favourite maxims to themselves, and resolved to reject every thing inconsistent with them, whatever wretched shifts they might make to do it: Nay, it seems manifest, that here that blasphemous suggestion was advanced, that he *Cast out devils by the prince of the devils* †. There might be others more decent, who yet heard in vain; If they

* Prov. xxv. 12. † Mat. xii. 24.

*Wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth* *, those words were *To them* but *as the lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument* †; they heard them, but they would not do them: Or if any impressions were made, they quickly wore them off again, and were enchanted back into the same circle of pleasure or business. So that on the whole, they rejected the gospel which was so well calculated to reform them, and grew more hopeless under it than ever. *If he had not come and spoken unto them, they would* in comparison *have had no sin; but now they had no cloak for their sin* ‡: And the interpretation, that he himself with all his unequalled candour was obliged to pass upon their conduct, with whatever indignation they might reject the charge, was this, that *They had both seen, and hated, both him and his Father* §. What could be expected then from such aggravated and incorrigible wickedness, but

III. The doom pronounced upon them; that dreadful doom, which we are next to consider, that *having been exalted unto heaven, they should be brought down to hell; and it should be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for them.*

You will easily observe a strong and beautiful opposition in the former clause of the sentence; and both that, and the latter, may express—their temporal ruin, but much more cer—their future condemnation.

1. It may perhaps express their temporal ruin.

We know that this is sometimes signified by this expression, *being brought down to hell.* The destruction of Babylon is foretold by Isaiah by this very phrase, to shew *How the oppressor should cease, and the golden city cease: Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell* ‖; that is, thou shalt be utterly destroyed and buried in thy own ruins. And such, we know, was the doom of Capernaum. Many of the vices, which we have naturally enough supposed to have abounded in it, would in their own consequences have led it on to certain, though to slower ruin: But God, as is frequently his method, interposed to execute this fair, yet abandoned criminal, before she died of her own debaucheries.

I do not remember, that we read any thing particular concerning the circumstances of the ruin of Capernaum: But as

* Luke iv. 22. † Ezek. xxxiii. 32. ‡ John xv. 22.
§ Ver. 24. ‖ Isa. xiv. 4, 13, 15.

all the country about the Galilean sea was over-run by the Roman army in the war that quickly happened, it undoubtedly shared the fate of its neighbours, of whose terrible destruction Josephus gives a most affecting description in the third and fourth books of the Jewish war. It was then plundered of its wealth, and in all probability its streets and palaces were filled with the dead bodies of its slaughtered inhabitants; as the historian says expressly, "that the lake on which the city stood, after a terrible sea-fight there, was covered with the floating corpses of the slain, which almost poisoned all the country round by the insufferable stench they emitted, while they remained unburied *." The country being thus subdued and trodden down by the Gentiles, who became its absolute Lords, Capernaum must have soon lost all its glory; so soon indeed, that many of the young people, who had been present while Christ preached in their synagogues and wrought miracles among them, must in a course of nature have lived to share the desolation. Thus the sword of the enemy entered into those hearts which had been impenetrable to that *Two-edged sword* that *went out of* the *mouth* of the Son of God †. And so entire was the ruin of the place, that, as we learn from Jerom, in his time, which was less than 400 years after Christ, "All that remained of the magnificence and glory of Capernaum, was six or seven poor fishermen's cottages ‡;" and modern travellers can hardly find a trace of it: So literally is it grown, like the much more celebrated city of Tyre, *Like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon* §. Such is the ancient Tyre; such, after all the privileges it enjoyed, Capernaum now is; and such the proudest city upon earth shall be, if God but mark it out for the like ruin. But more than this, these awful words of our blessed Redeemer did certainly express,

2. Their future and final condemnation.

*It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment*, in the great day of final retribution, *than for* thee. You see, the day of judgment is introduced, *that great and terrible day of the Lord.* And it is very necessary, that the memory of it should be kept up in the world, that men *Knowing the terror of the Lord* may, if possible, be awakened and *persuaded* ‖. Our blessed Redeemer himself, who was *Anointed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord*, considered it also as a part of his commission to declare *the day of vengeance of our*

* Joseph, de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 10. §. 9. † Rev. i. 16. ‡ De Loc. Hebr.
§ Ezek. xxvi. 14. ‖ 2 Cor. v. 11.

*God* * · And nothing is so awful as the language in which he describes it. But we are here to observe, it is implied,—— that Sodom and Gomorrah should have a part in it,—but that their part should be less dreadful than that of the people of Capernaum.

It is implied, " that Sodom and Gomorrah should have a part in the day of judgment." You well know, that God executed his vengeance upon them in the most tremendous manner, for those detestable crimes, which have rendered the name of Sodom so infamous to these very distant ages: And the history of their ruin is so circumstantially described, that it is evident, God intended it should never be forgot. Let me call you all, let me call especially the impenitent sinners that hear me this day, to pause for a few moments on the case of these wretched men. When the rising sun in all its beauty and glory was on a sudden obscured to them, fatally and for ever obscured, by that storm of wrath; when the awful moment came, in which God had determined to *Rain upon* them *snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest* †; Snares indeed, that took them, wherever they might attempt to fly: Endeavour to conceive as you can, though you can but imperfectly conceive, what must be the consternation of these wretches, that felt the earth reeling under them, and saw at the same time the heavens thundering upon them, and pouring a vast shower of burning brimstone instead of rain, firing their habitations, and torturing with far more than the agonies of common flame the bodies they had so delicately pampered, so infamously abused. For a few minutes they remained, either stupid and dumb with amazement, or shrieking out in torment and despair, and *Blaspheming the God of heaven because of their pain* ‡; the most lively image of hell, that earth ever saw, or shall see; till down they sink into the opening ground, the city and its inhabitants vanished in a moment, and nothing remained of their country, which just before was *Like the garden of the Lord* §, but a smoaking sulphurous lake: For so it is expressly said, that Abraham *Beheld, and lo, its smoke went up as the smoke of a furnace* ‖. Thus they became a sign and a proverb; for when God would describe the most entire destruction that can be conceived, it is by this emblem, *As the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah* ¶.

* Isa. lxi. 1, 2. † Psal. xi. 6. ‡ Rev. xvi. 11. § Gen. xiii. 10. ‖ Gen. xix. 28. ¶ Compare Deut. xxix. 23. xxxi. 32. Isa. i. 7—10. iii. 9. xiii. 19. Jer. xxiii. 14. xlix. 18. Lam. iv. 6. Amos iv. 11. Zeph. ii. 9. Mat. x. 15. and Rev. xi. 8.

Their memorial is now perished; except it be that memorial which is preserved of them in the book of God, where they are marked out in so dreadful a manner: And yet, all their punishment is not over. Our Lord tells us, that *in the day of judgment* they shall be remembered and visited: And we may assure ourselves, that their doom then shall be more terrible, than that which they suffered from the sulphurous rain, the earthquake, and the *pit*, into which many of them no doubt *went down alive*. Whatever their anguish and their terror then was, it shall in the great day be far exceeded: For we can never imagine, that God would bring them into final judgment, to punish them less in that tremendous solemnity, than they had formerly been punished; and we may be confident, that to *Depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels* *, to be cast into that *Lake which burns for ever with fire and brimstone* †, must be infinitely more terrible than the momentary pain, under the anguish of which they would soon have expired, and from which suffocation would probably much sooner deliver them.

But is this the sentence of Sodom and Gomorrah only? And shall this dreadful climate, be inhabited only by them? Nay, but it is the doom of Capernaum too; and what is most terrible of all, it is expressly said, *it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for Capernaum.* And thus,

It is implied, "that their part shall be less dreadful in the day of judgment, than that of the people of Capernaum." And it is reasonable that it should be so. Sodom and Gomorrah were righteously condemned: They abused the light of nature, which strongly witnessed against wickedness monstrous like theirs: They rejected the preaching of Lot, by whom they might have learnt the knowledge of the true God, and the way to serve him with acceptance. But though they violated the dictates of reason, though they abused the bounties of providence, though they despised the preaching of Lot; yet they heard not the gospel of the Son of God. A much greater than Lot, was in the midst of thee, O Capernaum! Justly therefore are thy children, who would not receive his doctrine, who would not obey his charge, who would not regard his miracles, doomed to a severer vengeance, to a more intolerable condemnation: so as to look with envy upon the milder tortures inflicted upon those egregious sinners against their own souls.

* Mat. xxv. 41. † Rev. xxi. 8.

But this is not said of them only: It touches us nearly; and Oh that, as we are so often reminding you of it, you may all seriously consider it! What our Lord asserts concerning Capernaum, he elsewhere says concerning all, who will not receive, embrace, and obey the gospel: For these are his words to the first messengers of it, *Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city**; and by a parity of reason, for every city, for every town, for every village, for every soul, by whom the gospel shall be rejected, after having been plainly and faithfully laid before them. Oh! hear it again! *It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for* them.

And now, methinks, I am ready to interrupt my discourse, and could rather, were I sure you would attend me in it, sit down, and *cover my face, and weep.* For if these are indeed the words of the Son of God, they are big with a terrible tempest; and it hangs over what we call the christian world; it hangs over this island, which is in many respects the glory of it. And have we no forebodings, where the heaviest part of it might justly fall? Is there no city that rises to our thoughts, far superior to Capernaum in its wealth and magnificence, and in some respects more than equal to it in its guilt? Oh London, London!—dear city of my birth and education,—seat of so many of my friends,—seat of our princes and senators,—centre of our commerce,—heart of our island, which must feel and languish, must tremble, and, I had almost said, die with thee!——How art thou *lifted up to heaven!* How high do thy glories rise; and how bright do they shine! How great is thy magnificence! How extensive thy commerce! How numerous, how free, how happy, thy inhabitants! How happy above all, in their religious opportunities! In the uncorrupted gospel, so long, so faithfully, preached in thy synagogues! displayed in so many peculiar glories, which were but beginning to dawn when Jesus himself dwelt in Capernaum, and preached repentance there! But while we survey these heights of elevation, must we not tremble, lest thou shouldst fall so much the lower, lest thou shouldst plunge so much the deeper in ruin?

My situation, Sirs, is not such, as to render me most capable of judging concerning the moral character of this our justly celebrated metropolis. But who can hear what seem the most

* Mat. x. 14, 15.

credible reports of it, yea, I will add, who can walk its streets but for a few days with any other observation, and not take an alarm, and be ready to *meditate terror?* Whose *spirit* must not, like that of Paul at Athens, be *stirred**, when he sees the city so abandoned to profaneness, luxury, and vanity? Is it indeed false, all that we hear? Is it indeed accidental, all that we see? Is London wronged, when it is said,—— That great licentiousness reigns among most of its inhabitants, and great indolence and indifference to religion even among those that are not licentious?—That assemblies for divine worship are much neglected, or frequented with little appearance of seriousness or solemnity; while assemblies for pleasure are thronged, and attended with such an eagerness, that all the heart and soul, seems to be given to them, rather than to God:—That most of its families are prayerless, wanting time it seems, or rather wanting heart, for these social devotions; while many hours of every day can be given to recreations and amusements at home, if by any accident that it is impracticable to seek them abroad:——That the sabbath, instead of being religiously observed, is given to jaunts of pleasure into neighbouring villages, or wasted on beds of sloth, or at tables of excess:—That not only persons in the highest ranks of life, but that the trading part of its citizens, affect such an excessive gaiety, and grandeur, and delicacy, the very reverse of that frugality of our ancestors, who raised the city to what it is:—That men in almost every rank are ambitious of appearing to be something more, than those who stand in the next rank above them could conveniently allow themselves to appear; and in consequence of this, are grasping at business they cannot manage, entering into engagements for what they cannot answer, and so, after a vain and contemptible blaze, drawing bankruptcy upon themselves, and exposing to the danger of it, honest, industrious persons, who are won by that suspicious face of plenty which they put on, to repose a confidence in them, on that very account so much the less reasonable and safe:—That the poorer sort of the people are so grossly ignorant, as to know hardly any thing of religion, but the sacred names, which they continually profane; so wretchedly depraved, as to consume their time and strength in reaching at those low and pernicious luxuries which they may hope to attain; and so abandoned, as to sink unchastised into the most brutal sen-

* Acts xvii. 16.

sualities and impurities: While those who would exert any remarkable zeal to remedy these evils, by introducing a deep and warm sense of religion into the minds of others, are suspected and censured as whimsical and enthusiastical, if not designing men:—In a word, That the religion of our divine Master is by multitudes of the great and the vulgar openly renounced and blasphemed; and by others but coldly defended, as if it were grown a matter of mere indifference, which men might without any great danger of mischief, reject at their pleasure; yea, as if it were a matter of great doubt and uncertainty, whether men's souls were immortal, or whether they were extinguished with so empty and insignificant a life. Men and brethren, *are these things* indeed *so?* I take not upon me to answer absolutely, that they are; but I will venture to say, that if they are indeed thus, London, as rich, and grand, and glorious as it is, has reason to tremble, and to tremble so much the more for its abused riches, grandeur, and glory.

There is indeed, as has often and justly been observed, one token for good amongst these symptoms of danger; I mean, a variety of charitable foundations and institutions amongst you, so far as I know, unequalled through the whole world; as well as a freedom from persecution and oppression, those detestable evils, which wherever they are to be found, cry so loud for vengeance, and for which it is expressly said, that Babylon, Nineveh, and Jerusalem were destroyed. There are also, blessed be God, not a few inhabitants of this city, who reverence God; who believe, and obey, and adorn his gospel; who dare, in the midst of so many contrary examples, to stand up for the honour of christianity with resolution and zeal; and who are solicitous to infuse a deep sense of its excellency and importance, into the minds of their rising offspring, and of others whom providence has placed under their care and influence: These of whatever denomination, and with whatever modesty and silence their designs are conducted, *Are the salt of the earth* *, that hinder the corruption from becoming universal: They are the guardians of the city in which they dwell, and stand in that breach, at which judgment would otherwise pour in like a torrent. Let such be established, encouraged, and quickened, by representations like those I have now been making. *The eyes of the Lord are upon them* especially at a crisis like this; *and his ears* will be *open to their cry* †. Let them be exhorted, to exert themselves with a growing zeal for a general reformation, so far as their influence

* Mat. v. 31. † Psal. xxxiv. 15.

may extend. Let them by their examples go on to plead this important cause; and let every art and labour of pious education be attended to, that the minds of youth may be rescued from the growing contagion, and stored with those seeds of virtue and piety, which may make the next generation much happier than the present: And to these labours of love let such join their fervent prayers, which have already, I doubt not, been in some cases efficacious, and which, in proportion as they grow more frequent and importunate, may be yet more so. All that love Zion, will say amen to them; and may the Lord our God say so too!

To the rest, who swim with the stream, who follow the multitude, and who argue themselves into security, either from epicurean principles, or from not having yet felt those scourges of God, under which so many other cities and nations have fallen; to those who disregard providence, as well as neglect and despise the gospel;—I shall only at present address that awful oracle of God by Zephaniah, which ought to have its weight wherever circumstances resemble what are there supposed: *It shall come to pass, saith the Lord, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil: Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation.* So it may really be, peaceful as the present appearances are. God can raise up enemies, where we least expect them; nor does he need the weapons of war to chastise, or its engines to overthrow a guilty city. But however its impenitent inhabitants may escape such temporal judgments, concerning the probability of which we can but very uncertainly denounce; I will take up the parable, and say in the sublimest sense, the following words can admit, and in such a light as the awful denunciation of my text throws upon them, *The great day of the Lord is near, it is nearer and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord;* which shall be ushered in by the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; when the heavens as well as the earth shall be shaken, and pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the day, in which *the mighty man*, the boldest and the haughtiest sinner, *shall cry bitterly: That day of wrath*, that *day of trouble and distress*, that *day of wasteness and desolation*, that *day of darkness and gloominess*, that *day of clouds and thick darkness*, which no description even of a prophet's pen can paint in colours sufficiently terrible; that *day of the trumpet and alarm*, that shall *bring distress upon men, because they have sinned against*

*the Lord.* They may trust in their strength, they may boast in their riches; but *the fenced cities, and the high towers,* shall be brought down; *neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath,* when *the whole land,* when the whole earth, *shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy* *. This alarm I leave with you; and Oh that it may operate to produce the great effect, in which all our ministry, if we understand our own true interest and yours, ought to center, even that of leading you to him, whose great prerogative and office, whose glory and joy, it is, *to deliver from the wrath to come!* Amen.

* Zeph. i. 12—18.

# COMPASSION TO THE SICK

*Recommended and urged: A Sermon preached at Northampton, September 4, 1743, in favour of a design then opening to erect a County Infirmary there for the relief of the Poor, Sick and Lame.*

TO THE

## RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF HALIFAX.

MY LORD,

THE generous and active zeal with which you have espoused the charity this sermon is intended to recommend, and the assiduity with which you have vouchsafed to preside in the committee appointed for ripening the general scheme, and bringing it into effect, might justly have intitled your Lordship to this application; had your various abilities been much less conspicuous, and the other parts of your character, incomparably more valuable than any abilities, been less known to the author, or less reverenced by him. Yet I am very sensible, that the plain and hasty discourse, which I have now the honour of presenting to your Lordship, might fear the review of an eye so accustomed to all that is eloquent, beautiful, and finished in antiquity, did it not trust to that kind prejudice, which your attachment to its general design will naturally give you in its favour.

I am sensible, how impertinent it would be in me on this occasion, to give myself a liberty of saying all the respectful things, which from my heart I think of the Earl of Halifax, or to imagine, that his general permission of inscribing this sermon to him would authorize the doing it. But it would be over rigorous in your Lordship to prohibit my intimating that pleasure I have shared with so many more discerning persons than myself, in observing that accurate judgment, that steady application, that impartial equity, and that engaging address, with which your Lordship, under the character of our chairman, has conducted the counsels and affairs of the committee. I know, that I speak the sentiments of several of its members, and I believe I speak the sentiments of all; when I say, that in the fatigue of that close attendance, which we have thought it our duty to give on this good occasion, we have often been relieved by reflecting, as it was most natural to do, on the benefit which the public must receive from such talents, when exerted in the highest assembly of our nation. There your Lordship finds a sphere of action more amply proportioned to the largeness of your heart, and suited to that high sense of liberty, and benevolent concern for the general good, which is the brighest ornament of a Peer, and of a Briton.

Go on, my Lord, to shine in this ornament more and more. Animated by every principle, which humanity, and nobility, and, what is most humane, and most noble, true christianity can suggest; go on to exert the distinguished capacities of usefulness, with which providence has blessed you, in such ser-

vices, and by exerting to increase them; and with them to increase that veneration and affection, which every worthy heart will pay you as a just tribute, and that infinitely more important and divine pleasure, which your own will find, in the consciousness of having acted well. A pleasure indeed worthy of the most ardent pursuit; and on which heaven sets so high a value that it allows it not to be treated with by proxy; nor will grant any thing like it, to the most illustrious birth, the most ample fortune, or the most elevated genius, unless the possessor of them all will go to the price of it by a resolute exercise of personal virtue.

I rejoice, not for myself alone, but for my country, that our civil, and sacred liberty hath one such guardian among the rising nobles of our age: I hope, it has many; and I pray God, their number and their virtues may be increased; and that wherever they are, they may be rewarded with a rich variety and a long succession of external blessings, joined with that inward satisfaction which is inseparable from such a character.

May your Lordship especially, not only have the sublime joy of beholding Great-Britain distinguished among the nations by public honour and prosperity, but see every thing, which can conduce to your personal and domestic happiness, added in private life! And in particular, when you condescend to turn your thoughts towards Northampton, a town under hereditary obligations to your Lordship's family, which I hope it will never be so ungrateful as to forget, may you soon and long have the satisfaction to see its county hospital, which you are now so kindly cherishing in its infant-weakness, grown up to full maturity, and giving more certain presages of being an extensive blessing to generations yet to come!

I sincerely congratulate your Lordship, and the other illustrious nobles and worthy gentlemen, who are exerting themselves in this good work, on a capacity of doing greatly for its service, while my narrow sphere will allow me little more than to wish it well. Yet it is a comfort to me to think, that this discourse, in which, imperfect as it is, I flatter myself there will be found traces of an honest and a tender heart not easily to be counterfeited, will be some memorial of the affection with which I have endeavoured to serve it, and at the same time of the unfeigned and profound respect with which I am,

*My Lord,*

*Your Lordship's most faithful,*

*Most obedient, and most obliged humble servant,*

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

# COMPASSION TO THE SICK RECOMMENDED AND URGED.

## PREFACE.

The great desire which I have to promote that noble and amiable charity which is now set on foot among us, has engaged me to comply with the request of some of my friends in publishing this sermon, which was delivered on too little notice to allow of much preparation. But indeed very little reflection is necessary, where the arguments in its favour are so obvious; and little art can be required to plead a cause, which, as soon as it is admitted to a short hearing, speaks so loudly and so eloquently for itself.

The only plausible objections, which I remember to have heard against it, are these two:—That the distant parts of the country can expect little benefit by it;—and that any private house, which can be taken for the purposes of a County Hospital, can bear but little proportion to what the necessities of so large a county will require. But I hope, neither of these objections will be found unanswerable; and if every objector will do his part towards removing them, I am sure they cannot be found so.

I apprehend myself to have no right to speak here of the particular precautions, which the committee has taken with regard to the first of these; but shall refer the reader to the statutes of the intended Hospital, when they shall be published, as they quickly will. But it may, and ought to be taken for granted, till the contrary appear, which I persuade myself it never will, that the rules for the admission of patients will be so constituted among us, as well as elsewhere, that patients coming from distant parts will have some preference given them, to those that are near home. And as none but chronical cases are likely to offer from a distance, if due precautions be taken in writing and answering letters, in the representation of cases, and in bringing patients, I cannot see any probability of frequent disappointments. If the contrary be suspected, let gentlemen and others, who are willing to act for the encouragement of the charity, if it be duly ordered, favour us with their presence at our next general meeting of subscribers, and there let them examine what the committee will then offer on this head, as well as on others, and if they are not satisfied with what is already adjusted, let them propose any more effectual methods of making them easy on this head: They will no doubt be heard with all due regard, and the assistance of their counsels be thankfully acknowledged by all who have the interest of the Hospital at heart.

As for the second objection, the force of it cannot be thoroughly judged of, till the house intended for the reception of patients be known, and the projected alterations in it are examined. If after this it be still insisted upon, that we should build, then let those, who are in that sentiment, subscribe their respective benefactions for that purpose; and there can be no doubt, but the work will be joyfully undertaken, as soon as there appears any fund so considerable as to render it safe. But in the mean time it would surely be most unreasonable to clamour against any governors, or committee, who may be established, for not attempting it, while they have no stock for so great an undertaking, in any tolerable degree proportionable to it. This county, so well cultivated

and inhabited, and celebrated for the seats of so many of the nobility and gentry, is capable of doing great things if it pleases, and may, like Devonshire, without feeling any sensible burden, command a spacious and commodious edifice to arise for this purpose in a few months; and if no unexpected providence obstruct it, I know not what should forbid us to hope and expect it. Good examples are already given, great patrons are engaged*, and measures are entered into for soliciting the county in the most prudent and engaging methods that could be contrived. The effects will soon be seen; and then, not till then, the managers will be able to judge what they can at first safely attempt, and will, I dare say, greatly rejoice to see a much grander scheme practicable, than they have allowed themselves particularly to project.

It is with great pleasure, that I see persons, who have been listed under opposite parties, and who bear different denominations, cordially uniting to advance this generous scheme, and consulting to make each other as easy as possible in the execution of it. There is very little in the following sermon, which is no matter of common concern, as we are christians, and as we are men; and I am not aware of one word, which can reasonably give offence to any: And therefore I hope, the name of the author will be no prevailing prejudice against its acceptance and usefulness. I cannot think an attempt of this kind out of character in present circumstances. I have peculiar obligations to love a county, where I have spent so many agreeable years, and in the various parts of which I have the pleasure of enjoying a personal friendship with so many deserving people. But had I been only an occasional resident in it for a few months or weeks, I could not have refused what little I might have had an opportunity of doing, in subserviency to a design so friendly to human nature as this. Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto.

*P. D.*

* This refers to the honour, which his Grace the Duke of Montague and the Earl of Northampton have done us, the former in accepting the office of grand visitor of the hospital, and the latter that of perpetual president; as well as to the important assistances, which the Earl of Halifax has given, and is giving, as in every other generous and zealous service to the design, so especially in presiding as chairman in the present committee for drawing up the statutes of the Hospital, and taking other preparatory measures for putting the plan into the most speedy and effectual execution: Circumstances, which in so happy a concurrence, have given a spirit and a weight to its resolutions, which it is hard to imagine how they could otherwise have had. I mention not the names of several others of the nobility, gentry, and clergy, who have distinguished themselves on this occasion: The list, when published, will speak the generosity of their subscription; and other services, not capable of being represented there or here, will, no donbt, live in the grateful memory of all who have particularly known them, without any such records.

# SERMON V.

Psalm xli. 1, 3.—*Blessed is he that considereth the Poor; the Lord will deliver him in Time of Trouble: The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing: Thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickness.*

IT is matter of certain observation, and of delightful reflection, that under the administration of a wise and gracious providence, even the distresses of human nature are so over-ruled, as to occasion some of its most exquisite pleasures. Our own have this effect, when generously encountered in a good cause; or when, from whatever source they arise, we bear them with a calm resignation to the great Governor of all, animated by an humble confidence in his goodness. And the calamities of others, deeply as they wound every compassionate heart, are the accidental cause of a proportionable satisfaction attending every humane attempt for their relief. This is what I am persuaded, many of you, to whom I now speak, have often experienced already; and I hope, that experience will now be largely and happily renewed. I am confident it will, if what I am about to lay before you in favour of the scheme, which is now opening upon us, for a County Infirmary to be erected here, be regarded in such a manner, as I have great reason to hope it will; considering how noble a charity it suggests, and how ready I have ever found you to comply with every call of providence to contribute liberally for the assistance of the necessitous.

That important branch of christian charity, which consists in giving alms to the poor and indigent, has been the subject of so many of my discourses, that almost every topic, and every argument, which I could think of to enforce it, has been warmly and frequently urged upon you; and the fairest examples of such a disposition have been particularly illustrated, that, charmed with the beauty of them, you might go and do likewise. Especially you have been often pressed by that noblest and tenderest of all arguments, which arises from the infinite

compassion and benevolence of the blessed Jesus, and the distinguished genius of his religion; as having charity for its declared end, and rising above all other religions, as much in the excellence of its tendency, as it doth in the dignity of its Author. And therefore, without so much as recapitulating what I have said on such occasions, I shall make it the whole of my present work, to suggest such things, as may have a peculiar suitableness to that particular kind of charity which we have now in view: And I think myself exceedingly happy in this opportunity of offering you a set of thoughts, which would never before have been equally seasonable here. Many of them will naturally arise from the words which I at first read, as the foundation of my discourse; *blessed is he that considereth the poor, &c.*

It would perhaps be too bold a criticism, to pretend to determine the particular distemper, under which David had been labouring, just before he composed this admirable Psalm. But I think it is in general abundantly evident, that it was occasioned by a violent and dangerous fit of sickness; in which he met with most inhuman treatment from some base and wicked men, who had pretended great affection to him. "*Mine enemies*, says he, *speak evil of me*, saying, *when shall he die and his name perish?* They think the distemper, terrible as it is, does its work too slowly, and would gladly, if they durst, aid its victory by murder. *And* as for him who is the chief of them," by whom some suppose he meant Absalom, whose unnatural rebellion might be ripened by the concurrence of this circumstance, "*if he come to see me*, as he frequently does under specious pretences of duty and affection, yet in all his most respectful condolences, *he speaks vanity* and falsehood, and *his heart is* in the mean time *gathering iniquity*, is making one malignant remark or another, *which, when he goeth away* out of my apartment, *he proclaims* abroad to increase the disaffection he is endeavouring to sow among my subjects. And their mischievous counsels are quickened and emboldened hereby, while *they say, an evil disease cleaveth fast unto him*, as a peculiar judgment of heaven upon him; *and now that he lieth* disabled in his bed, *he shall arise no more. Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted* to have given me the surest assistance in my pressing affairs, while I am thus rendered incapable of attending to them myself, even he *who did* so long *eat of my bread*, and had a place at my table, has like an ungrateful brute that strikes at his feeder, *lifted up his broad heel against*

*me*," as the original imports *, "and endeavoured to do me all the mischief in his power."

This was king David's unhappy circumstance in his illness, as royal dignity can neither secure the continuance of health, or the fidelity of friendship, nor fortify the heart against the sting of ingratitude; especially in such a concurrence of afflicting circumstances. On his recovery he described it in the most lively colours; and to represent how much it impressed him, he speaks of the scene, as if it were actually present: And that a proper contrast might set it off the more forcibly, he begins the psalm with an affectionate reflection on the beauty of a contrary character, and on the happiness to which the possessor of it was entitled. *Blessed is he who considereth the poor.* The original is yet more emphatical and extensive: *Oh the blessedness*, or the various felicities *of that man who wisely reflects on the case*, and circumstances *of him that is brought low* †. The margin renders it, *him that is weak or sick:* And another translation gives it thus, *blessed is the man that provideth for the sick and needy;* which is a sense undoubtedly comprehended in the words, though I cannot think them limited to it. They speak of a person *reduced* and *brought low*, whether by poverty, or oppression, or sickness, or any other calamity, affecting mind, body, or estate‡: From whence it will clearly follow, that where several

* הגדיל עלי עקב † אשרי משביל אל דל

‡ They who can consult the original, and will give themselves the trouble of tracing the etymology from דלל, and examining the many places in which this word is used, will soon see the justice of this remark. It most frequently signifies *poor*, and accordingly is often opposed to *rich;* as, Exod. xxx. 15. Ruth iii. 10. Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. x. 15. xix. 4. xxviii. 11. It is sometimes rendered *brought low* in our version; as, Psal. lxxix. 8. cxlii. 6. and cxvi. 6. in which last place the connection shews, it relates to *sickness.* It is sometimes applied to streams *emptied and dried up*, Job xxviii. 4. Isa. xix. 6. and sometimes it signifies *emaciated*, Isa. xvii. 4. and is in that sense applied to Pharoah's lean kine, Gen. xli. 19. and to Amnon when pining away for Tamar; 2 Sam. xiii. 4. agreeably to which מדלה derived from the same root is rendered *pining sickness*, Isa. xxxviii. 12. And it is elsewhere used to express a *weakness* in the eyes and limbs: Compare Isa. xxxviii. 14. where דלו עיני למרום should be rendered, *mine eyes are so weakened*, i. e. by languishing illness, *that I am not able to look up.* And Prov. xxvi. 7. which verse might most naturally be translated, *As the legs of the lame sink under him*, (דלין שקים מפסח) *so doth a parable in the mouth of fools:* Solomon thereby beautifully expressing *how feeble* the sublimest discourses on moral and religious subjects are *in the mouth of a vicious man.* I know many critics have produced these two last texts, as instances in which דלל signifies *to be lifted up;* but I believe, if most of the places, in which the same Hebrew word is said to signify contrary things were accurately weighed, they would be found as little to the purpose of proving that very improbable, and in many instances mischievous assertion, as these two.

of these causes join, as the circumstance is peculiarly worthy of compassion, the virtue, and therefore the *blessedness*, of him who is ready to pity and relieve it, must be proportionably great.

The word which we render *considereth*, is sometimes used for *taking an intelligent view of a thing*, and sometimes for *acting in a prudent and reasonable manner, suitable to such views* *. And accordingly it well expresses the character of one, who examines into the circumstances of the afflicted creature of whom David speaks, and upon that takes wise and proper measures for giving him the most convenient and effectual assistance he can. And as on the one hand, it may be intended to recommend the use of discretion in directing and managing our charities; so on the other, it may intimate, that where men overlook those that are brought low, it is an evidence of a narrow inattentive mind, that takes up with short and superficial views of things; whereas if men's sentiments were juster, their affections and actions would be kinder and more beneficent. They would find, that nature, and duty, and interest too, if rightly considered, and justly estimated, would all dictate the same thing on such occasions.

This will especially appear, when it is considered, in how gracious and condescending a manner the blessed God, the supreme disposer of all events, is pleased to interest himself in the cause of the indigent and distressed, and the kind notice which he takes of the man that appears as a patron of such persons. *The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble*, or, as it might more literally be rendered, in the day of calamity †: As if it had been said, "There is a revolution in human affairs, as well as in the returning seasons of day and night, of summer and winter. Calamity will have its day, and the time will come, when they, who are now most prosperous, will find themselves surrounded with dark and gloomy schemes. And then may the generous and charitable man hope to receive the compassion he hath extended; or, as we elsewhere read, *With the merciful thou*, Lord, *wilt shew thyself merciful* ‡" And indeed one cannot without astonishment, as well as delight, reflect on what is so suitably and so tenderly added in the third verse, to express the divine care of such a person. *The Lord, Jehovah* himself, in whom *is everlasting strength* §, and who bears up the pillars of

* שכל has plainly the former signification, Neh. viii. 13. Job xxxiv. 27, 35. Psal. xiv. 2. Jer. ix. 24. Dan i. 4. and the latter, 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15, 30. Psal. cvi. 7. Amos v. 13.

† ביום רעה ‡ Psal. xviii. 25. § Isa. xxvi. 4.

heaven, *Will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing*, or as it might be rendered, will *support him*, or *hold him up* there *: *Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness*†: Some would literally render it, thou wilt change his bed, and explain it of turning a bed of pain and distress into a couch of pleasure and delight; supposing it alludes to their custom of lying on couches in their banquets. But I think the image which our translation suggests equally suits the original, and is, on account of its tenderness, greatly to be preferred. The good man is now supposed in his turn to be brought low by illness, so exceeding low, that he is not able so much as to sit up in his bed; and God does not disdain to represent himself under the image of an affectionate friend, or parent, who holds him up in his arms; and himself assists in turning his bed, and making it easy to him, when, being too weak to rise, he is only able to shift the sides.

Amazed and charmed with an expression of so much condescension and endearment, I set myself, with additional pleasure, as in the presence of this compassionate God, to open my mouth, and plead the cause of the poor and the afflicted; and would attempt to cultivate in your minds, and in my own, the temper which the words recommend. That I may do it in the most suitable and useful manner, I shall,

I. Represent the reasonableness of a compassionate temper, towards those in general, who are languishing on beds of sickness.

II. Shew how wise and happy a method of expressing our compassion towards such, that which is now recommended to us is likely to prove: And,

III. Conclude with the mention of some circumstances in the present situation of affairs, by which the design is peculiarly recommended to us at this time.

I. Let me represent in general how reasonable it is, that we should feel compassion in our hearts towards those, who languish under the burden of bodily disorders, and particularly are confined to beds or chambers of sickness.

And this you will not only see, but feel too, if you reflect—on the calamity of their state;—on the tender sense they naturally have of the treatment they meet with in it;—and how liable we ourselves are to the same circumstances of distress.

1. Consider the calamity of their state.

Some of you know it by familiar acquaintance, by dear-

* יסעדנו † בל משכבו הפכת בחליו

bought personal experience, and must have *The worm-wood and the gall in* a long and painful *remembrance* *. Go back in your thoughts to those chambers, which you were almost ready to consider as your sepulchres, and those beds, from whence perhaps you expected to rise up no more, or which seemed as racks, if not as graves, to you; and then say, whether you were not objects of compassion yourselves, and whether others, in the like circumstances, must not necessarily be so. Others of you have, no doubt, been conversant with the sick and the pained: Reflect on what you then saw and heard; and let your eye, and your ear affect your heart.

There are indeed some, who seem solicitous to keep as much as possible from the sight of such mournful objects; as if they were afraid, that in such a circumstance an involuntary kind of humanity should invade their hearts, and force them on a sudden, and as it were before they are well aware of it, to do something more generous than they care to allow themselves in. But no man, who hath lived any time in the world, can be such a stranger to human nature, and to human life, as not to know something of the various distempers and accidents to which we are liable in this feeble state, and of the sad symptoms of sorrow that attend them: Fatal effects of the entrance of sin into this world of ours, and awful monuments of the divine displeasure against the first instance of it!

I am not indeed learned enough to run over the tenth part of those names, which physicians have given to the various maladies under which their aid is demanded. But the fever, the dropsy, the gout, the stone, the rheumatism, the cholic, the asthma, the cancer, the palsy, consumptions, and the like, are words of dreadful import; to the general signification of which few are strangers, though perhaps none, who have not themselves laboured under them, can distinctly understand how much terror they express.

Let us however think a little closely, for the thought may have an apparent tendency to humble and to humanize our hearts, into how sad an object the greatest, the richest, the strongest, and the fairest of mankind is reduced in a few weeks or days, when attacked by any of these, and crushed, as it were, into an early, and an untimely old age. *When thou*, Lord, *with* thy *rebukes dost correct man for* his *iniquity*, how dost *thou cause his beauty* and his vigour *to consume away like a moth* †, which moulders under the lightest touch! How are all the services of

* Lam. iii. 19, 20.

† Psal. xxxix. 11.

life obstructed, and all its choicest pleasures blasted at once, as the opening blossoms of spring by the severity of winds and frosts! According to that most natural description of Job, when a man is *Chastened with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain*, how does *his life abhor bread, and his soul dainty meat;* so that *his flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and his bones, which were not seen, stick out*!* In some distempers, what convulsive strugglings, what terrible heavings and pantings for breath! In others, what deep sighs do we observe, what piercing groans, what doleful cries! Or in persons of a more resolute temper, amidst a painful silence, what earnest speaking looks, while perhaps large drops of sweat are trickling down the face, and nature seems, as it were, to be weeping its distress at every pore! And in cases less acute than these, what *Months of vanity* are many active souls made to possess, and what *wearisome nights are appointed to* them †! How slowly do the hours and the moments roll away, while *In the evening they say, would to God it were morning; and in the morning, would to God it were evening‡!* But find themselves equally disappointed in their expectations of relief, from the silence of the night, or the amusements of the day: Till at length perhaps nature is weakened to such a degree, that it can scarce bear the voice of the dearest friend, if a little louder than a whisper, or endure so much light as shall discover his countenance! God only knows, how many are at this moment in a condition sadder than I have described, while we are ourselves *At ease in Zion* §, and *Are* too little *grieved for the afflictions of* our brethren ‖. Yet surely, if we have any thing of the man, and the christian, we cannot be wholly unmoved, but must feel some tender solicitude rising in our hearts, and must be casting about in our thoughts for some proper manner of expressing it; especially when we consider,

2. The peculiar tenderness of the spirits in such circumstances as these, and that exquisite sensibility, either of regard, or neglect, which is almost inseparable from them.

Such is the vanity of human friends, that they can do much to wound, where they can do very little to heal; their negligence can greatly afflict, where their most solicitous care can administer very little comfort. And this is more especially the case in sickness. When the blood is impoverished, when the animal

* Job xxxiii. 19, 20, 21. † Job vii. 3. ‡ Deut. xxviii. 67.
§ Amos vi. 1. ‖ Amos vi. 6.

spirits are weakened, and when melancholy humours prevail in the body, little things impress with a very disproportionate weight. Solomon hath observed long ago, that when *Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop*, then *a good word maketh it* peculiarly *glad**. And by a parity of reason, then, any thing that looks like unkindness in a friend pierces much deeper, than at another time; when nature is in all its vigour, and the business and amusements of life divert the mind from pausing on such things, and the imagination from dressing them up in colours of its own, which, unnatural as they often are, appear to the distempered mind inherent in the objects themselves. Sick people likewise, conscious to themselves that they cannot but be less agreeable than at other times, easily conclude, that they grow insupportably burdensome to those about them: And if great care be not taken to prevent it, they will be very ready to infer, that their friends are wearied out with them; and perhaps will secretly suspect, they wish them out of the way, that they may be eased of their burden: While they imagine, like Job, that were their *friends* in such an *afflicted* state as themselves, they should study all opportunities of softening their sorrows, by every circumstance of the most tender address †: And then they bemoan themselves, and think, surely it is enough to bear all this illness and pain, without having the unkindness of such and such a friend added to it: And so perhaps, the saddest complaints of Job ‡, David §, and Heman ‖, are thought over as applicable to their sorrowful condition.

This is indeed very often their infirmity; but we should bear it, and pity it, and study, as well as we can, to accommodate ourselves to it: For it undoubtedly makes their case much more afflicted, and therefore more compassionable. And it will especially appear so, if we reflect,

3. How liable we ourselves are, to share in these sorrows and these infirmities.

This thought is beautifully touched upon by the apostle, when he says, *Remember those that suffer affliction, as being yourselves also in the body* ¶: As if he should have said, "In necessary consequence of being in the body, you are yourselves obnoxious to the like affliction; and therefore should readily impart to your afflicted brethren such assistances, as you in a change of circumstances would reasonably desire."

And is it not most evidently the case here? What are *We*

* Prov. xii. 25. † Job vi. 14. xvi. 5. ‡ Job vi. 15. xiii. 4, 13. xvi. 2, 20. xix. 2, 3, 14—22. § Psal. xxxviii. 11. lv. 12, 13. lxix. 8, 20. cxlii. 4. ‖ Psal. lxxxviii. 8, 18. ¶ Heb. xiii. 3.

Sirs, *better than our fathers**? Better than our brethren? Better than those, who have drooped, and sunk, and died, under such burdens as those I have described? *Is our strength the strength of stones, or is our flesh of brass*†, that we should plead an exemption from sorrows and complaints common to our species? In all probability, they await us; and would await us, if we were nobles and princes of the earth: And God only knows, how soon we are to begin our encounter with them, or how soon they may complete their victory over us, and bring us beyond the reach of being helpful to men, or receiving help from them.

And, which is peculiarly interesting, these are probably some of our last scenes. When we have done with our merchandise, our husbandry, or our studies; when we have finished our journies, our visits, our sports, and our feasts, we must, unless death surprise us with a very sudden blow, retire into our chambers of illness to come out no more, but languish away the remainder of our days there, till the moment of our exit from life shall come. There shall we need the compassion, we are now exhorted to extend; shall need all the relief, which a generous heart may then feel, in a consciousness of having been, in its better days, an helper to the afflicted; and above all, shall need that divine consolation, which God is ready to impart to that *blessed man, who* has *considered him* that is *brought low*, so graciously expressed in the text, by *holding him up on his bed of languishing*, and by *making all his bed in his sickness.*

And therefore, in the conclusion of this head, let me intreat you to *Suffer the word of exhortation*‡, and to bear away in your hearts a firm resolution of doing all you can, to be helpful to the sick, whatever their other circumstances in life be, as providence may give you an opportunity and call. *Consider those that are brought low;* Reflect seriously and tenderly on their condition; for they sometimes suffer a great deal from the mere inattention of those about them, who yet could not bear on any terms deliberately to do what they apprehended cruel or unkind. Let us, as afflicted Job expresses it, (for afflicted persons know best how to speak of afflictions,) *Put our souls into their souls' stead*§. Let us inwardly commiserate their melancholy case; and let our behaviour express that commiseration in the most natural and genuine manner. Let us be ready, where it may be useful to them, to *visit them;* for *visiting the sick* is, you know, mentioned among those acts of charity, which Christ

* 1 Kings xix. 4. † Job vi. 12. ‡ Heb. xiii. 22. § Job xvi. 4.

assures us he will commemorate with peculiar honour, even *Upon the throne of his glory* *. Let us patiently bear those instances of fretfulness and peevishness, into which under such a pressure they may be ready to fall; imputing them to their distemper, and not to themselves. Let us avoid every thing rough and boisterous in our behaviour, near the apartments in which they are; and let nothing be done, which might give the poor patient reason to sigh on his bed, and say, "Alas they do not regard me! they little think what it is to be ill!" Shew in all your conduct a concern for their comfort and happiness: Shew it, above all, by endeavouring by wise and pious discourses to lead them into the best improvement of their afflictions, and to form their minds to such sentiments and characters, that through divine grace they may be entitled to the noblest supports; those which arise from a sense of the divine favour, from pardoned guilt, and from a comfortable prospect in the invisible and eternal world; that so they may not struggle at once with the agonies of a distempered body, and a wounded spirit; but rather, *As the outward man declines*, may find *the inward daily renewed* †. And to shew how sincerely you are concerned for their spiritual, neglect not their temporal interest. If they are poor, extend your alms to them, and endeavour to procure for them such medicines, food, attendance, and other accommodations, as may promote their recovery, or at least alleviate their sufferings. It is what, I question not, many of you are often doing, and you now have an opportunity of doing it with some peculiar advantages; as you will evidently perceive by what I have to offer under my second general, the business of which is,

II. To shew how wise and happy a way of expressing our compassion to the sick and infirm, that which is now proposed to us is likely to prove.

You apprehend, that I mean our concurrence in this scheme for establishing a county hospital in this town, for the relief of the poor, who are sick or wounded; into which, in extreme cases, they may be freely received, and in which they may be properly assisted, without expence to themselves, or the families to which they belong.

The very mention of this design might seem sufficient to recommend it to every intelligent and generous person; and I am sure none who have perused the printed paper in favour of it, which has been generously published and spread over the whole

* Mat. xxv. 31. † 2 Cor. iv. 16.

county, can be uninformed on this subject: Nevertheless, as it may be new to some, and others may have reflected but slightly upon it, I shall say something briefly on the head, and I hope a few words may suffice; since the scheme wears so beautiful an aspect, if only viewed in its first appearances: as well as appears so fruitful of good, when attentively examined in its remoter consequences.

1. You will easily see, that the scheme wears a very beautiful aspect, if viewed only in its first appearances.

It promises, in its most obvious and direct design, relief to the poor in their sickness; and their case is attended with many circumstances to recommend it to our compassion, which have not yet been touched upon in the preceding branch of my discourse. What I have said before might be sufficient to prove, and one day's experience of our own might in a yet more convincing manner demonstrate, that sickness of itself is a burden heavy enough, though we languish upon beds of down, and have all the relief we can derive from the skill of physicians, the attendance of servants and friends, with every other additional accommodation which the most plentiful fortune can furnish out. What then must it be to bear all this, and perhaps more than this, in the want of all things! What must it be for a person, who perhaps found it hard enough to live when he was in all the vigour of nature, and *His own hands ministered to his necessities* *, to find himself under his languor, perhaps under his agony, destitute of medicines, destitute of attendance, and it may be, destitute of convenient food, with hardly any thing but inclination, in these cases no certain guide, to direct him what is so. Or if pressed with a sense of urgent necessity, after long delay, he calls in such assistance, and procures it, perhaps it is at such an expence, that his spirits are broken with the thoughts of the debt he is contracting, which either prevents, or retards, or embitters his recovery; and when it is perfected, almost tempts him to wish he had quitted the world, rather than survived under such an insupportable pressure.

But so far as the scheme now opening upon us succeeds, this additional load of misery will be taken off. The patient will be encouraged to seek for timely assistance, before his illness becomes inveterate, the neglect of which is, no doubt, yearly the destruction of thousands: And when his case is so bad, as to require his being taken into the infirmary, he will be kept clean and warm, with convenient accommodations of food, physic,

* Acts xx. 34.

and lodging: He will be kept under proper regimen and government, which may shelter him, on the one hand, from becoming a prey to ignorant pretenders, whose chief merit seems to be, to sell diseases and death at reasonable rates; and on the other, he will be protected from imprudence, which is oftentimes more fatal than the disease; while according to the rules of the house, it is put out of his own power to indulge himself, or to be indulged by over fond friends, if such he have, in what would be pernicious to his health.

In consequence of this we see, that many are recovered in such houses as these, who have long languished in their own, under tedious and extremely dangerous distempers; some of them, perhaps, after having, like the poor woman in the gospel, *Consumed all their living on physicians, and been nothing the better, but rather the worse* *.

Facts impress the mind more strongly, than any reasonings unsupported by them. I therefore think it proper here to tell you, that I have made the most careful observations I could, on those yearly accounts of other hospitals which have come to my hands, viz. those of Winchester, Bath, Exeter, York, Bristol, and the London and Westminster infirmaries. Few of these have reached back farther than three years, and some have extended only to one; and I find on the whole, that we have an account of seven thousand three hundred and thirty, who are known, or supposed to be cured, and only of seven hundred and eighty-four, who have died, or been discharged as incurable: So that it should seem by this hasty and imperfect calculation, for such I confess it to be, that near ten patients have been relieved for one who has failed of success.

I find palsies, dropsies, consumptions, fevers, leprosies, rheumatisms, cholics, stone, as well as multitudes of ulcers, fractures, dislocations, and the like, on the list of those calamities from which these poor creatures have been relieved: And it farther appears, that great numbers of these had been languishing under their distempers two years, others five, ten, twelve, fourteen, and a few twenty years; and this after some of them had been reduced to so low an ebb, that their admission was blamed as an hopeless attempt, yet a few months have turned their captivity, and they have gone out from those gates vigorous and cheerful, into which they were brought almost like corpses borne on men's shoulders† .

* Mark v. 26. Luke viii. 43.

† I am credibly informed, that at Exeter there has been an instance or two of persons, who on account of their extreme weakness were brought into the hospital laid in their coffins, who have gone out carrying their coffins, on their backs.

What heart does not feel a secret pleasure at hearing such an article! Who would not rejoice, if even large contributions could be the means of procuring so happy effects! But it ought farther to be considered in favour of this design, that there is, in proportion to the good to be expected from it, great frugality and liberality so dispensed. For it is certain, as many have observed on such occasions, that a small sum thus managed will go farther, than a much larger given to relieve the sick poor at their own houses; as the same person may attend on different patients at the same time; and as the medicines and provisions to be used in the house may be bought at the best hand; whereas it is often, and I fear, too justly said, that the poor generally pay dearer than others for what they have *.—What is thus given is also much securer from being misapplied, either by the persons themselves, or by others, who might be base enough to make a prey of them.—Nor can I forbear mentioning it, as another most agreeable circumstance attending the charity proposed, that it often shelters the person, who receives the benefit of it, from the mortification of coming to a parish-allowance; and perhaps of being consigned over to a work-house: Which is generally a terrible sort of infirmary indeed, where we have reason to fear, there is seldom sufficient care taken to secure the cleanliness, the quiet, or the morals of those, who are so unhappy as to be brought thither; though perhaps some of them have lived creditably and comfortably in families of their own, have long contributed to the support of the poor around them, and have been at last reduced by the afflictive hand of providence, without any visible crime of theirs, or any remarkable imprudence. A state, which, when sickness is added to it, appears one of the most desolate and deplorable which can be imagined: So that it is no wonder, the very prospect and apprehension of it should press, in a very painful manner, on an honest and tender spirit, and greatly increase

* It has been spoken of, in the supplement to the account of Exeter hospital, page 3, as a thing universally confessed, that more remedies may be administered for ten pounds in this way, than for fifty in another. And the truly reverend and excellent Dr. Alured Clarke, whose memory will ever be dear to all good men who knew his character, says in the preface to his sermon at the opening of Winchester hospital, page 5, "If half the money that is given should really be perverted, which I hope there is not the least reason to suspect, there would still be more good done by it than by any other possible way of distributing to the necessities of the poor: So that every wise man would think it worth his while to exert his endeavours in this way, out of mere good husbandry to himself and the public." He afterwards adds, page 9, 10, "It is well known, that several thousands are relieved in these hospitals at a less expence, than can be afforded for so many hundreds in any other way."

the force of any bodily disorder, which seems to threaten so sad an event.

Reflect, christians, on such considerations as these; and add to all, that you are the disciples of that benevolent *Jesus, who went about doing good* *, and who particularly expressed the tenderness of his generous compassion, by *Healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people* †. This was the calamity of human nature, which seems of all its temporal evils to have impressed him most; and I am sure, if we have any thing of his spirit and temper, without which we are none of his, we must necessarily wish well to a design of this kind, if it were only considered in reference to those, who receive in their own persons immediate relief from it. But I am to add, that as the scheme appears thus amiable in its most obvious aspect, so likewise,

2. It will appear more abundantly fruitful of future good, when attentively weighed in its remoter consequences.

The benefit extends much farther than the persons thus relieved. It evidently affects others of their families, who have that time and labour to employ in the business of their respective callings, which must otherwise have been taken up in attending the sick. It extends also to all those, to whom the patients themselves may be useful when recovered from their illness; whether their near relations and friends, who have any dependance upon them; or the public, who owe much more, than we are generally aware, to the labours of the poor, and upon that account are under great obligations to them, which I fear are seldom considered. Not to say, that in many cases, the very existence of those yet to be born may, under God, depend on such cures.

I shall not now insist on the advantage which others may receive in their illness, by the improved skill of physicians and surgeons, in consequence of their attendance on such hospitals; though it is evidently a very possible thing, that the lives of very useful and valuable persons may be so preserved. It is yet more obvious and certain, that many other poor may be relieved in the respective parishes to which they belong, by that money from the parish stock, which must otherwise have been employed upon the sick: Or if, in consequence of being discharged from this burden, the parish rates be lessened, as perhaps in many places they sensibly may be, the subscribers of that parish are then paid in specie; and after the honour and

* Acts x. 38. † Mat. iv. 23.

pleasure of bestowing their bounty, a part of it immediately flows back upon them again. And how much may so flow back, and with what large accessions of blessing, God only knows; as he only can tell, what casualties and diseases are warded off, what prosperity and success in affairs may be allotted, as the token of his favourable regard to this pious munificence.

Neither can it be improper for me to add upon this head, that what was more directly intended as a benefit to the body, may prove a blessing to the soul. For dissolute persons, by this means being brought for a while under regular discipline, may perhaps be broken and reclaimed: The good instructions they receive from ministers who attend them, especially while the rod of God is upon them, and his sword may seem to hang over them; the spectacles of mortality frequently before their eyes; together with regularity and good order to which in such places they will be accustomed, and their being sheltered from many temptations, from which, in some kinds of sickness, the patient is not necessarily secure; may all, under the influence of divine grace, prove the means of sowing the seeds of true religion in their hearts, and of infusing into their minds that noblest of all cordials, an antidote against the servile fears of the second death.

Nor does it appear to me a contemptible effect of this charity, that as it is necessarily concerted upon a plan, in which all parties and denominations are equally concerned, it will probably be a means of promoting more candid and catholic sentiments, in consequence of repeated opportunities of mutual converse. This wears out that narrowness and bigotry of spirit, which, where it prevails, renders the christian so unlike himself; and which is generally the effect of ignorance, and arises from viewing our brethren through false mediums, which represent, what may in itself be regular and fair, in a distorted and disagreeable form. As interviews with each other have a general tendency to rectify such mistaken apprehensions, that tendency is peculiarly evident, where this circumstance is added, that all are associated in the same good design, and have agreed on laying aside every party view in pursuing it. This may promote something of that unity of heart, under a variety of professions, which good men on all sides wish; and which, amidst such an unavoidable diversity of sentiments, is the only method of securing the honour of christianity, and the peace of the church.

I must by all means add, that whatever good consequences

this scheme may produce, which are many more than I have enumerated above, our engaging heartily in it may render them both extensive and lasting. It is probable, that neighbouring counties may quickly learn to imitate our example, when they see in fact that it is no impracticable design: An apprehension, which I suppose has hitherto been the chief obstruction, where its obvious benefits have been at all thought of. At length it may spread from county to county, till perhaps there will not a parish be found in Britain which shall not have an interest in some such charitable foundation; to which they may send their sick in the most obstinate chronical cases, with some prospect of relief. Thus the remotest regions of our land may have reason on this account to *call us blessed;* and I will add, the remotest generations may also have reason to do it. Reflect how many hundreds are at this day, enjoying the benefits of those wise and charitable foundations, which our nation owes to the pious and beneficent king Edward the Sixth, of truly sacred and immortal memory. So would I hope, that in this place, when our children, and our grand-children are in their graves, their remotest descendants, which arise in their stead, and God only knows, what revolutions may bring any of them to need it, may have cause to reflect on this year 1743, as the happy æra of an establishment, to which many around them may owe their health, their comfort, their usefulness, and possibly, under God, their christian principles, and their immortal hopes. Whatever streams may in the mean time have flowed into it, and God grant, they may be as large as shall be needed, the fountain will be traced up hither; and blessings will be pronounced on the memory of those, who have opened to these refreshing and *healing waters* so free and so pleasant a course.

These considerations I lay before you, not to extort any thing from you, as against your wills, by mere importunity; but to convince you of what I hope will be abundantly sufficient to engage your concurrence in the design; I mean, that it is eminently calculated for extensive usefulness. I wish you may heartily join in it, because I wish your present happiness, and your future comfort. It is observable, that when our blessed Redeemer sent forth his apostles, *as sheep among wolves*, he gave them this consolation in the midst of their poverty and affliction, that though as for *silver and gold they had none*, they should be able to command one of the noblest delights which riches could purchase, in being the means of *Healing the sick* *. This was,

* Mat. x. 8.

if I may be allowed the familiarity of the expression, one of the great perquisites which he permitted to these his most favourite servants; that their hearts, rendered no doubt by his grace exquisitely sensible, should have the God-like pleasure of beholding from time to time the cheerful countenances of those, who had lately been among the most lamentable spectacles of human nature, and now under God owed their health, their limbs, and their lives to them; and of seeing the joy of families and neighbourhoods, made happy by the recovery of those who were dear to them. I wish you, my brethren, beloved in the Lord, a pleasure something like this of the apostles; and may I not add, of their master too, so far as a diversity of circumstances will admit. And it is not only in compassion to the afflicted, but in the overflowings of the sincerest friendship to you, that I go on, unnecessary as it may almost seem, in the conclusion of my discourse,

III. To touch on some circumstances peculiar to the present season, which may especially recommend this scheme to our immediate regard.

And here it is obvious to think of the war in which we are now engaged, of the mercies of the harvest which we have lately reaped,—and of the crisis to which the scheme is now brought, which therefore must be immediately supported, or sunk beyond all probable hope of future recovery.

1. The consideration of the war, in which we are embarked, may properly be introduced as what should have some weight with us on this occasion.

This should engage us as a nation, to conduct ourselves in as virtuous and pious a manner as possible; as the most probable way of drawing down the divine blessing upon our arms; Now it is very reasonable to suppose, that acts of public charity, being in their own nature so peculiarly pleasing to the gracious Father and Governor of the universe, must have a great tendency to this. An ancient Jewish writer expresses this in terms remarkably adapted to the present purpose: "Help the poor," says he, "for the commandment's sake; and shut up alms, as it were, in thy store-house;" almost as if he had said, raise hospitals for magazines: "And it shall fight for thee against thine enemies, better than a mighty shield, or a strong spear;" that is, than any kind of defensive or offensive armour. Nay an inspired prophet, when giving advice to him, who was then the greatest monarch upon earth, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, expresses himself thus: *Oh King, let my counsel be acceptable*

*unto thee: Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening out of thy tranquility* *.

And as a view to our future interest, especially in this nice conjuncture of affairs, may require such a care; so it will be a very proper expression of our gratitude, for the assistance which God has lately given us. The victory at Dettingen was a very remarkable and seasonable appearance of providence in our favour, which we have been solemnly acknowledging again and again in our public devotions. Let us also acknowledge it in our actions. Let us present some grateful tribute toward this good work, as a thank-offering to him, who *Giveth salvation to kings* †, for having so graciously guarded the life, the liberty, and safety of our sovereign, king George. Had *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord*, been *taken in the snares* of the enemy ‡, *And our glory* in any sense been *delivered into their hand* §, expences of a very different nature might have been occasioned, and have fallen upon our broken spirits with a very afflictive weight. But I will not dwell on so melancholy a thought. We are presenting our daily prayers for his majesty's security and prosperity, while, with a generosity which I hope our nation will never forget, he is *Hazarding his life* for us *in the high places of the field* ‖: Let our alms rise with our prayers, if we desire they should *Come up as a* grateful *memorial before God* ¶.

2. The mercies of the harvest may likewise properly be mentioned, as rendering the charity I have been proposing peculiarly seasonable.

God has remarkably appeared for us, to *Crown the year with his goodness* **, and to load the earth with his bounty; and he has added this, to complete the favour, that he has reserved to us, in as agreeable a manner as we could ourselves have wished, *The appointed weeks of the harvest* ††. More seasonable weather on such an occasion has not, so far as I can learn, been known in the memory of man: Seasonable in this respect, that as *The bottles of heaven* have been so restrained ‡‡, that there have been no violent rains in the time of harvest, to sweep away or corrupt the fruits of the earth; so for several of the most busy and important days, God has spread his cloud over the heavens, so as to shelter the reaper in the midst of his toil from those excessive heats, which often render autumn much

* Dan. iv. 27. † Psal. cxliv. 10. ‡ Lam. iv. 20. § Psal. lxxviii. 61.
‖ Judg. v. 18. ¶ Acts x. 4. ** Psal. lxv. 11. †† Jer. v. 24.
‡‡ Job xxxviii. 37.

more sickly than it would otherwise be. Since then God hath made such provision for *Satisfying our poor with bread* *, and for preserving our health too, he may seem thereby to call upon you, by the gentlest voice, to give him, in this pious work, a part of that substance with which he hath replenished you. And surely you must feel yourselves drawn, as by *the cords of a man*, to lay out this way some of the stores which he has with so liberal a hand poured in upon you, and which in sparing your health he has both spared and sweetened. *Honour the Lord*, therefore, *with your substance, and with the first-fruits of all your increase* †, as a thankful acknowledgment of what he hath already done; and then you may by his promise be encouraged to hope, that in future instances, *Your barns shall be filled with plenty, and your presses burst out with new wine* ‡. Know, my friends, that God hath given you your *corn, and* your *wine, and* your *oil* §, and hath multiplied your wool and your flax. *Lay by* therefore for charitable uses, *as God hath prospered you* ‖, and as you hope and desire he should prosper you in years to come: Otherwise you may chance to have calculated your interests very wrong, and may find to your cost, that as *There is that scattereth, and yet* greatly *increaseth*, so *there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth* only *to poverty* ¶. Once more,

3. Let me plead from the particular crisis, to which this affair is now brought, which is such, that it must be determined by what is immediately, or at least quickly, done.

The scheme of a county hospital among us was thought of, and hinted at long ago; but it was then looked upon as a thing to be wished, rather than attempted and hoped. The attempt is now courageously and vigorously made, and no inconsiderable sum has already been subscribed for that purpose: And what is much more important than any subscription yet made, many of the nobility and gentry of the county who have not yet ascertained particulars, have declared their approbation of the general design, and their resolution to favour it. It is greatly for their honour to have done it, and we may have reason to bless God who hath put it into their hearts: But it would be most ungenerous and unreasonable, to leave the whole burden upon them. It is the general concurrence of the inhabitants of this county, which must give the greatest strength, stability and extent to the scheme.

* Psal. cxxxii. 15. † Prov. iii. 9. ‡ Prov. iii. 10. § Hos. ii. 8.
‖ 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ¶ Prov. xi. 24.

Let me therefore intreat your cheerful and resolute concurrence. Suffer not this amiable infant, (if I may be allowed the expression,) to be deserted, and die, for want of due support in its tenderest state; nor let it be said, in *Hezekiah's* words, that when brought *to* the *birth*, *there was not strength* and assistance *to bring* it *forth**. Lend your charitable aid now, if you ever purpose to do it at all; for if it drop now, we cannot expect ever to see it revived: Since the defeat of this attempt, so far advanced, and so warmly solicited, will be looked upon as a demonstration to many, that the thing cannot be effected; whereas it is most evident, that if it miscarry, it must not be charged on providence, but on ourselves. Nothing surely can prevent its success, humanly speaking, but such dispositions, as I am unwilling on this occasion so much as to name, in those who should be leaders in every good work.

If these shameful causes should prevail to frustrate all, we love our neighbours, our brethren, and the public too well, not to lament it. But let us at least have so much regard to the credit of our characters, and the peace of our consciences, as to shew, that it fails not for want of our concurrence. I know, it is but very little in comparison that we can do. We are by no means distinguished for our wealth, and we have of course our burdens and expences peculiar to us, as a society of dissenters. Nevertheless, let us judge equitably, as to what we are able to contribute, and let us do it cheerfully: Rejoicing in this, that we act in the presence of a most gracious and merciful father, who, *Where there is a willing mind, accepts a man according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not* †.

Let not therefore any of the poorer part of mankind, who often have as generous and as compassionate hearts as any which are to be found on earth, be discouraged, because they have not their guineas, or even their crowns to give on this noble occasion. Were great numbers to join their smaller contributions through such a county as this, it would swell to a very considerable sum. And which is the most agreeable thought of all, each would have his part in the honour and pleasure of doing something towards helping forward so worthy a design. And I am sure, it is the part of humanity to wish, that those, who move in a lower sphere, may share with the rich and great in such pleasures as these; though they cannot in many others, much more expensive, yet not equally exquisite and refined. The joys of liberality, and the delights of benevolence, were intend-

* 2 Kings xix. 3. † 2 Cor. viii. 12.

ed by the great author of our nature, like the light of the sun, to be the portion of the whole species, and to extend themselves to the lowest of mankind.

I hope therefore that all, who can without great inconvenience to themselves and their families afford it, will do something to promote this generous scheme. But I would remind those of you in particular, who are in more distinguished circumstances of life, that you are in the sight of God and man obliged to distinguish yourselves in the various exercises of liberality. I have a great authority to warrant me to do it, and I think it one of the truest offices of friendship which a minister can perform to such, to *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God;* and that, as they desire any well-grounded trust in him, they practically acknowledge him as the great Lord of all, by being *rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate,* so *laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life* *. And if there are any of you whose riches God hath lately increased, either by causing your grounds to bring forth plentifully, or by giving a favourable turn to the commodities in which you deal, or by any other methods of sudden prosperity; as I may say to you, I come in a good day, so I should think, you had reason to fear that very prosperity were a curse, and might be the means of destruction to you, if you did not feel your hearts as it were melted by it, and disposed to flow forth in the streams of large and cheerful beneficence. I would rather hope, that God has been providing an easy and abundant accession for this public charity, by the accession he has been making to your capacity of supporting it.

I would also particularly beseech those of you, who are of tender constitutions, and know, by your own frequent experience, the calamity of illness, to pity the sorrows you have so often felt, and to shew a readiness to relieve the poor who are labouring under them; as you desire that the eye of mercy may be directed toward you, and that the arm of God may be extended for your support, if such distresses should return upon you. And I hope, any whom God may lately have raised up to life and health, when they seemed in the extremest danger of being *deprived of the residue of their years*, will hear how loudly he calls upon them, to present a thank-offering, so suitable to the nature of that favour which they have received.

* 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

To conclude all, I would beseech every one of you who hear me this day, both high and low, rich and poor together, that they aid this good work by their prayers: A contribution, by which some of the poorest may be eminently helpful; for such are often peculiarly *Rich in faith**, and high in the favour of the King of heaven.

And may he, the great Patron of the afflicted, and of those that pity them, say Amen to our united petitions! May he graciously guide the minds of those, who are concerting the scheme, and ripening it for fuller execution! May he open the hearts of those, who shall be applied to, that they may give freely and cheerfully, in full proportion to what he, the only perfect judge, certainly knows to be their respective abilities! And may he abundantly reward all, who from worthy principles shall assist in so excellent a work, with health in their persons, prosperity in their families, peace in their minds, and at length, through the merits and grace of the great Redeemer, with an eternal abode in that world, where the great physician of souls having fully accomplished his healing purposes, *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick*†*!* Nevertheless, the grace of *Charity* shall live and reign there‡; though such methods of expressing it, as I have now been recommending, be happily superseded: Nor is it at all improbable, that some, whom we have for a few days lodged in our house of mercy here, may there, as our Lord himself expresses it, *Receive us into everlasting habitations*§. Amen.

* James ii. 5. † Isa. xxxiii. 24. ‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 8. § Luke xvi. 9.

THE

ABSURDITY AND INIQUITY

# OF PERSECUTION FOR CONSCIENCE-SAKE

*In all its Kinds and Degrees.*

CONSIDERED IN A SERMON PREACHED AT NORTHAMPTON.

## PREFACE.

THE emissaries of the Roman see are so far from giving up their cause in this kingdom as lost, that the most distant prospects of success produce new and vigorous efforts to promote it. Some time since, they were very busy in town, and in many places in the country, perverting the common people, and making proselytes. These bold steps awakened the attention of those who have always manifested a warm and disinterested zeal for the reformation; and gave occasion to that seasonable attempt, which was made the last year, by several eminent ministers, in a Course of Lectures at Salters-Hall, to prevent the growth of popery. Our fathers beheld that mystery of iniquity with abhorrence and terror; but the present generation were not so well acquainted with its fatal tendency. It would, therefore, have been an inexcusable neglect, if, while the enemies were sowing tares, the servants had slept, or had not faithfully warned the rising age of their gross errors in doctrine, and of that superstition and idolatry with which they corrupt and defile the christian worship.

I observed, with pleasure, that those sermons met with general acceptance. The vast demand for them, amongst persons of a different taste and education, is a full evidence of the masterly manner in which that important design was executed. And I cannot but look upon it as a singular happiness to the public, that the work fell into the hands of men who understood the true principles of liberty, and steadily pursued them through the whole performance; which has not always been the case of those who have gone before them in that controversy. The secular powers were not called upon to interpose with their authority; but a calm and sober appeal was made to the holy scriptures, and to the reason of mankind, as the only proper judges in these debates.

On a careful perusal of the following discourse, I conceived it might be of service to publish it; and since it attacks one of the principal bulwarks of the popish usurpation, I apprehended it could not appear with greater advantage, than as an appendix to the above-mentioned lectures, if my worthy brethren concerned should approve of it in that view.

It has been the great unhappiness of many protestant dissenters, that they have entertained too narrow sentiments of the right of private judgment;

without which a separation from an establishment can never be rationally defended. The writings on that argument, in which the question, in all its circumstances, is examined, are so large, and the reasoning so abstracted, that I have long wished for something more immediately calculated for popular use: and so much the rather, as pious and well disposed minds have been too much impressed with the pretences urged to justify religious severities, without considering the consequences to which they lead.

My known affection to the author may perhaps incline some to conclude, that I am prejudiced in his favour, and will readily recommend every composure which he offers to the world: but so far as I am capable of judging of this discourse, it is the best I have ever seen on the subject in so narrow a compass; the case of persecution is so clearly stated, the absurdity and iniquity of it so fully exposed, and the reasons advanced in its defence, especially those drawn from the penal laws amongst the Jews, are so well answered, that, I am willing to believe, it will give satisfaction to all impartial and candid readers.

It is with a great deal of concern, that I have taken notice of some unwary expressions, dropt by our writers of the last age, which countenance restraints inconsistent with toleration in its largest extent. These have been industriously collected to upbraid and condemn us. And it has been artfully and maliciously insinuated, that when we are pleading for liberty, we are only struggling for power to deprive others of the privileges we claim for ourselves. I hope the ensuing pages, in concurrence with that ample testimony which has been borne to the same cause, by the most considerable persons amongst us, will silence our adversaries, and wipe off so unjust and invidious a reproach.

*D. SOME,*

*Harborough, Feb.* 17, 1735-6.

# SERMON VI.

Luke ix. 55, 56.—*But he turned, and rebuked them; and said, ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them.*

IF popery be considered in a religious view, it must appear the just object of our contempt, as well as our abhorrence; but if we regard it as a political contrivance, to gratify the avarice, and ambition of the clergy, it will appear very artfully adapted to answer that end. The *wisdom of the serpent* eminently prevailed, when the *innocence of the dove* had long been lost. Cunning ecclesiastics, who were by their office obliged frequently to converse with persons under awakenings of conscience, and serious impressions, laid hold on that opportunity of improving themselves in an acquaintance with human nature; and on that foundation they gradually formed and completed a scheme, dexterously adapted to make the minds of their people easy, by the same notions and forms by which the clergy inriched themselves, and secured that temporal dominion and grandeur, for which they were contented to exchange true christianity, and to make merchandise of the souls committed to their care.

Some of these principles were so evidently absurd, that the common sense of mankind, however bribed in their favour, must often have risen up in open opposition to them, had freedom of inquiry been allowed, and the scriptures been left in the hands of the people. It was therefore one of their most important artifices to take away that key of knowledge, and to put out that light which would have exposed the folly and wickedness of their conduct. And farther, to support that Babel which must otherwise have sunk under its own weight, the powers of this world were brought in, and its rulers taught to think it their highest honour to employ their sword against those obstinate miscreants who were disobedient to the faith, as the priests thought fit to explain it. To injure the weaker part of their subjects in their religious rights, was represented as an ample atonement for violating the civil liberties of them all; and thus the mouths of gainsayers were most easily and effectually stopped. From

some countries the reformation was utterly excluded, in others it was stifled in its very infancy, and in some rooted out, after it had for a while been happily advanced.

This is undoubtedly the grand bulwark of popery, even to this very day; and were it removed, the anathemas of the church would become as incapable of giving terror, as they are of doing any real mischief. And therefore one of the most effectual methods which can be taken to secure and promote the reformation, is to convince men, if possible, of the absurdity and iniquity of persecution for conscience-sake, in all its kinds and in all its degrees.

This is what, by the divine assistance, I purpose to attempt this day; nor could we at any time more properly examine the subject*; since it is to the repeated deliverances of this day, that we owe our exemption from those usurpations and inhumanities, which would have deprived us of the liberty of arguing, or even of complaining. How justly the church of Rome is charged with persecuting principles and practices, you have heard: and blessed be God that you have only heard it†. How absurd those principles, and how criminal those practices are, I am now to shew you. And amongst a variety of scriptures, which might have been prefixed to such a discourse, I could think of none more proper than this which I have now been reading.

Our Lord was now going up to Jerusalem, at one of the great feasts; probably that of tabernacles: and as he then came from Galilee, he thought it proper to pass through Samaria. This was the directest road, which it was then perhaps necessary for him to take, in order to his being at Jerusalem in due time. You well know that in this country, i. e. on mount Gerizim, there was a temple built as a rival to that on mount Zion, to which the Samaritans, who after their way kept the three great annual feasts appointed by Moses, were probably at this time preparing to resort. But as our Lord appeared to be passing by this temple, and setting his face towards that where the Jews worshipped, these bigotted Samaritans denied him the common rites of hospitality, and would not suffer him and his attendants so

* N. B. This sermon was preached November 5, 1735.

† N. B. This particularly refers to a sermon on the persecuting principles and practices of the church of Rome, with which the author had concluded his course of lectures against popery last year. What is most important in that discourse may be seen, with much greater advantage, in Dr. Grosvenor's sermon at Salters-Hall, on the same subject; which is full of that easy, but penetrating and convincing eloquence, of which he is so eminent a master.

much as to refresh themselves at any of their inns; which seems to be all the favour they now asked. This was indeed very outrageous and inhumane treatment, and the apostles James and John, who were now present, resented it with a great deal of warmth. Full of zeal, and as they imagined of piety and of faith too, they only ask leave of our Lord to command fire from heaven upon these unreasonable and wicked men, assuring themselves that if an affront offered to the prophet Elijah, even by the express command of the king of Israel, were once and again thus severely avenged, the artillery of heaven would be yet more ready to plead the cause of the Son of God, when thus affronted, perhaps by some of the meanest of the people.

How far they would have extended the execution, if our Lord had favoured their motion, we cannot certainly say: perhaps it had reached farther than the persons from whom the offence directly came, and might have laid the whole city in ashes. It is certain, that a judgment, inflicted in such a miraculous way, would have been less liable to objection, than if secular power had been armed on the occasion. Yet our gentle and compassionate Redeemer, far from indulging their request, very faithfully reproves it, and expressly says, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of;* i. e. "You neither consider the difference which there is between the genius of the Mosaic and the christian dispensation, nor do you sufficiently weigh the secret motives, which influence you on this occasion; for, if you did, you would see there is something of pride, and personal revenge, mingling itself with your zeal for God, your affection to me, and my kingdom. Your proposal is, on the whole, most unsuitable; and, as such, I absolutely reject it. *For the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* The general design of my appearance is most benevolent and gracious, and I am determined still to act agreeably to it, and to exert my miraculous power in works of kindness, rather than of terror; for the preservation of mankind, and not for their destruction."

Now, surely, if our Lord thus severely rebuked his disciples for the proposal they here made, he would have censured them, with much greater displeasure, if they had talked of using his interest amongst the Jews, to raise an army to ravage Samaria by fire and sword; and, on the same principle, to spread desolation over the face of the whole earth, wherever they and their doctrine had not met with a favourable reception. The argument urged in the text would have concluded against this with

equal and superior force: *The son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

You see then, how properly these words may be used, to introduce a discourse against persecution on any religious account: I shall therefore, without any farther preface, go on,

I. To state what I apprehend to be the christian doctrine on this head, as opposed both to the tenets and practices of the Romish church, with regard to it.

II. To shew, by some plain arguments, the absurdity and iniquity of persecution, for conscience-sake.

III. To answer some of the most plausible considerations which have been urged in defence of it. After which I shall,

IV. Conclude with some practical improvements of the whole.

I should abundantly exceed the limits of a single discourse, if I were not to content myself with a few short hints on each of these heads, which have furnished out copious matter for several large volumes. And I hope, those who have had an opportunity of enquiring most accurately into the subject, and of perusing what has been written upon it, by some of the most celebrated persons of our age and nation, will not be displeased with such a short survey of what seems most material on both sides the question. And it may be highly necessary for others, who have not such leisure or abilities, and who, for want of having the matter fairly and clearly stated, may fall into sentiments very injurious to the honour of their profession, and the peace of their minds.

I. I am to propose what I take to be the christian doctrine on this head; and to offer some previous remarks toward stating the question aright, and preventing mistakes which often embarrass it.

I say, the christian doctrine, lest, if I call it the protestant, any should question the propriety of the expression. It is indeed too plain, that our first reformers, when they separated from other corruptions of the Romish church, retained this unhappy principle: That error and heresy are to be extirpated by violence; and that the conduct of some pious princes amongst the Jews, in destroying idolaters, is to be a model for christian magistrates." This was not the opinion of the pious Calvin alone, whatever pleasure some may now take in heaping distinguished infamy on him; but it is much easier to make a large catalogue of those in England, as well as abroad, who maintained this tenet, than of those who opposed it. Nor indeed can we

justly wonder, that the whole system of truth did not break in upon them at once. We have great reason to be thankful, that they were enabled to lay such a foundation, and that others, in succeeding ages, have, in any measure, raised and improved the superstructure: yet I will not presume to say, that all protestants are now agreed in what I take to be the truth here; it would be much for the credit, and much for the interest of their cause, if they were: and we ought earnestly to pray, that God, by his Spirit of goodness and love, would purge out the remainder of that old leaven, which still sours the hearts of some. But, I persuade myself, I am about to represent sentiments, in which multitudes of worthy and excellent men, of all parties amongst us, concur; and they seem to be breaking in on men's minds with a growing light: May it *shine more and more, until the perfect day!* The protestant doctrine on this head, so far as protestants are consistent with themselves, seems plainly to be this: "That none are to be subjected to any kind or degrees of civil penalties, merely on account of their religious opinions, or for any practices arising from them, if those practices be not detrimental to the peace of society, which the magistrate, by his office, stands engaged to preserve."

We readily allow, that if any man's religious principles carry him on to any actions injurious to others, in their persons or properties, he is to be restrained and punished, as any other offender might be. Should any man, for instance, offer his son as a sacrifice to Moloch, he would justly be treated as a murderer, notwithstanding any plea of conscience which he might pretend to make. For the magistrate has no business with conscience, which is entirely under the jurisdiction of God, but must never be allowed as an excuse for an action injurious to others; for this very obvious reason, that if it should be so allowed, there would be no room for any penal laws at all, and consequently all civil government would be overthrown. For a bold and impudent malefactor would never fail to have recourse to this easy and unanswerable apology, if his judges were so weak as to admit it. Nor can we indeed imagine any blacker villainies, than those which some have pretended to commit for conscience-sake.

We likewise grant, on the same principle as before, that if any man's religion necessarily subject him to the obedience of a foreign prince, the government under which he is born and protected, has a right, by the grand law of self-preservation, to insist on some more than ordinary security for his good behaviour in such circumstances. And this is evidently the case of the papists amongst us. They are under such obligations in conscience

to obey the pope, and to submit themselves to whatsoever prince he shall see fit to establish here, that they are at best but very precarious subjects to that royal family which the gracious providence of the Almighty has been pleased to fix on the throne of these nations; especially while there is a pretender to that throne devoted to the see of Rome, and espoused by it. Justly therefore may the present government insist on such security from them, as it does not demand from other subjects. And if in consequence of this, some hardships should fall on a few peaceable and well-disposed persons, who are too wise and honest to act to the utmost of what their own principles would warrant, it must be borne as an inconvenience inseparable from present circumstances. And perhaps it is an inconvenience less than those very persons might suffer, from the establishment of a religion so oppressive and tyrannical, as popery always appears, when it comes to be arrayed with the robe of the magistrate, and armed with his sword. However, it is a pleasure to every good-natured protestant, to think, that what they can suffer by the laws put in execution against them, is not very extreme; and that they suffer this, not for believing transubstantiation, or purgatory, nor for praying to saints, or bowing down before images; but merely for acknowledging the supremacy of the Pope, a doctrine so hurtful to all other supreme authority, that it is amazing all the princes in Europe have not long ago renounced it with the utmost disdain.

Allowing for such cases as these, which are not properly exceptions, we still maintain our proposition in its utmost extent; and assert, that unless God, the searcher of hearts, is pleased to interpose by a special revelation, which there is now no reason to believe he will ever do, taking the matter on the principle of human reason, or of the christian religion, no man is to suffer the least degree of punishment, either in his person or property, on account of his religious opinions, or of any practice consequent upon them, which is not an overt act, plainly inconsistent with the public peace, and punishable in another subject. They who are for a toleration limited, as good Mr. Baxter used unhappily to express it, "to errors which are not quite intolerable;" and would have such punished at least with fines and imprisonments, if not with greater severities, seem not to be aware of the consequences of their own scheme: and, as Dr. Owen very forcibly speaks, in his excellent Treatise of Toleration*, "They had need to examine their light; for their tenet

* Which, by the way, goes on as large principles, as Mr. Locke's afterwards did, and contains what is most essential in the controversy.

must lead down to the chambers of blood." We do not indeed pretend to say, that the Magistrate is obliged to make such provision for maintaining and accommodating those whom he apprehends to be teachers of error, as he may for those who are of his own sentiments, and consequently, whom he believes on the side of truth. This would be carrying matters to an excess; but surely, he has no right to inflict any penalties upon them, nor, in any degree, to abridge them in those liberties, which peaceable subjects are entitled to. And if he may exclude any from such places of civil trust, as their capacity, experience and fidelity might otherwise qualify them for, merely because their religious persuasions, and their modes of worship, differ from his own, it is upon principles, which I am yet to learn; nor can I perceive at present, how they are to be reconciled with those of a christian, and a protestant.

You will easily imagine, what reason I had to be thus particular in stating, and in guarding my proposition. I proceed,

II. To offer some obvious, but important considerations, for the proof of it.

And here I shall particularly shew, that persecution, for conscience-sake, in all its kinds and degrees, is built on the absurd supposition, that one man has a right to judge for another, in matters of religion;—That it contradicts the grand principle of doing to others, as we would think it reasonable they should do to us;—That it is by no means calculated to answer the end pretended to be aimed at by it;—but, on the other hand, tends to introduce a great deal of mischief and confusion, and to overthrow truth and religion in the world.—On these accounts, it is inconsistent with natural religion;—and it appears from the whole tenor of the christian revelation, that it is most contrary to that.

1. Persecution for conscience-sake, i. e. inflicting penalties on men, merely for their religious principles or worship, is plainly founded on an absurd supposition, that one man has a right to judge for another, in matters of religion.

How absurd this supposition is, has been fully proved at large, by many excellent writers in this controversy; and you have, no doubt, often heard, how contemptibly weak those arguments are, by which the Romish church would appropriate this right to itself. Nevertheless, absurd as their pretence to infallibility is, I confess there is much more consistency in the persecutions of those who claim such a privilege, than of those who acknowledge they are destitute of it. Can any man, with

the least colour of reason, pretend that I have a right to judge for myself, and yet punish me for using it? That is, for doing that which he acknowledges I have a right to do. To plead for it, would be a direct contradiction in terms. And if it should be said, as some have most weakly asserted, that the erroneous are to be punished, not for their opinions, but for their actions in consequence of those opinions, I would then enquire, for what actions? And how are these actions condemned? Not on account of their tendency to disturb and annoy the public; for that case has already been excluded from the charge of persecution: and, when that is excluded, I repeat the question, How are those actions condemned? Why, the persecutor must say, "I know them to be contrary to the divine law." But, how do you prove, that you are not mistaken? If you allow of argument on the head, you give up the cause of persecution so far. If you wave argument, you only, in effect, say, "The actions are wrong, because I condemn them; i. e. in other words, I am infallible, I am to judge for myself and you; and, by a parity of reason, for all the world besides." And who might not make that pretence? Or, how should it ever be decided but by the sword, in the present circumstances?

2. Persecution is most evidently inconsistent with that obvious and fundamental principle of morality, That we should do to others, as we could reasonably desire they should do to us. This is a rule which carries its own demonstration along with it; and it was intended on purpose to take off that bias of self-love, which would draw us aside from the strait line of equity, and lead us to be partial judges between our neighbours and ourselves. Now, I would ask the advocate of wholesome severities, How he would relish his own arguments, if they were turned upon himself! What if he were to go abroad into the world, amongst papists, if he be a protestant; amongst mahometans, if he be a christian? Supposing he was to behave like an honest man, like a good neighbour, like a peaceable subject; avoiding whatever would injure and provoke, and taking all opportunities to serve and oblige those about him: would he think that, merely because he refused to follow his neighbours to their altars, or their mosques, he should be seized and imprisoned, his goods confiscated, and his person condemned to tortures, or death? Undoubtedly, he would complain of this as a very great hardship. And what if one, who heard him plead for religious severities at home, were to remind him of it, would he not be wounded with his own arrows? What could he answer? "I am in the right and these people are in the wrong."

Nay, would the inquisitor, or the Turk, cry full as loudly as he, "But we are in the right:" and they might justly add, "With what face can you complain of us, for treating you in such a manner, as, you must confess, you should think yourself bound in conscience to treat us, if we were in your power, as you are in ours?" Surely, a man would see the absurdity and injustice of such a treatment, when it fell upon him; when, with such measure as he had meted to others, it was measured to him again. And accordingly, I must observe, as many have done, that the effect of this argument is so cogent, that those who, when they have had the power in their own hands, have been least willing to tolerate others, have immediately found new light breaking in upon them, as soon as they have needed toleration themselves.

3. Persecution is evidently absurd, as it is, by no means, calculated to answer the end which its patrons profess to intend by it.

I say, which they profess to intend: for if the priests do really intend to make the laity slaves, that they may exalt their own empire, and increase their possessions, it may indeed very probably answer that end; and these holy men may make themselves fat with the sin and plunder of the people, and purchase church-lands with the price of their blood. But, to save appearances at least, they profess to intend the glory of God, and the salvation of men; for so you know the forms of the inquisition run, "To answer to sundry questions relating to their soul's health, as well as the correction of their manners and excess." Now, I beseech you, let it be seriously considered, how persecution can be like to do good to men's souls.

To be sure, if it does them good at all, it must be, by making them truly religious. But what is true religion? Is it to repeat a creed, or subscribe a confession, to wear a name, or perform a ceremony? If it be, I am sure religion is much changed from what it was, when the scriptures were writ: and the nature of God must be entirely changed too, before such a religion can be acceptable to him, or before it can have the least value in his sight.

True religion must be founded in the inward conviction of the mind, or it is impossible it should be what yet it must be, a *Reasonable service* *. And pray let it be considered what violence and persecution can do, towards pro-

* Rom. xii. 1.

ducing such an inward conviction. It cannot to be sure do it immediately by its own power; because it is a demonstration, that will at the same moment suit both the parts of a contradiction. And it is certain a man might as reasonably expect to bind an immaterial spirit with a cord, or to beat down a wall by an argument, as to convince the understanding by threats or by tortures. They may indeed make a man mad, but it is the hardest thing in the world to imagine how they should ever make him wise.

Not immediately, you will say: we grant that. But mediately they may; as by these severities his mind may be awakened to attend to arguments; thus a rational conviction may be introduced: and *The rod and reproof* may *give wisdom* *. But I confess I cannot see how a man is the more likely to judge of an argument because he hears it on the rack, or because he sees the lash, or perhaps the sword over his head, and trembles lest he should not believe it. Far from opening the mind to fair conviction, methinks it should rather prejudice a man against it; as it would give him some aversion even to a draught otherwise agreeable, to have it forced down by such methods as a drench is given to a horse. There is, if you will pardon the expression, a kind of an elasticity in the human mind; and the more violently it is pressed down and bent, the more forcibly does it endeavour to expand itself again. But if this were to be put out of the question, we may depend upon it that none will ever have the better opinion of any religion because it makes its professors very bad men; and so they will undoubtedly think their persecutors to be.

Nay, indeed, I should rather think that if they were pretty well satisfied in the religion of their country before, the very thought of its being defended and obtruded on others in this brutish and unnatural way, would be enough to raise some secret suspicions to its disadvantage †: Suspicions which perhaps might prevail, and impress the mind more strongly, where men were not allowed to give any vent to them; or even to propose their doubts, lest it should be looked upon as a crafty way of insinuating their heresies, and should be a word spoken against their estates, or perhaps against their lives. On the whole, as you have often been told, persecution is much more likely to make men hypocrites than sincere converts. They

* Prov. xxix. 15.

† If there be on earth a way to render the most sacred truth suspected, it is supporting it with threats, and pretending to terrify men into the belief of it. Shafts. Char. Vol. III. p. 107.

may perhaps, if they have not a firm integrity, and heroic courage, change their profession, while they retain their sentiments; and, supposing them before to have been unwarily in the wrong, may learn, I will not say, to barter away honesty for truth, though that were a traffic which no wise man would covet, but rather to add falsehood and villainy to error. How glorious a prize after all! especially, when we consider, at what an expence it is gained. Which leads me to add,

4. That persecution evidently tends to produce a great deal of mischief and confusion in the world.

It may truly be said, where persecution is, and that zeal, and rage which is inseparable from it, *There is confusion, and every evil work* *. It is mischievous to those on whom it falls, and in its consequences mischievous to others too; so mischievous, that one would wonder, that any wise princes should ever have admitted it into their dominions; or that they should not immediately banish it thence. This follows, in part, from what I said under the former head of my discourse; even where it succeeds so far, as to produce a change in men's forms of worship, it generally makes them no more than hypocritical professors of what they do not believe; and this must undoubtedly debauch their characters: so that having been villains in one respect, it is very probable they will be so in another; and having brought deceit and falsehood into their religion, they will easily bring it into their conversation and commerce.

This effect persecution will have where it is yielded to. In other respects, it will be yet more immediately and apparently mischievous where it is opposed. And it is probable it will be often opposed, by those who have certainly a title to the greatest protection and favour of the government; I mean upright and conscientious men. An honest mind, zealous for what it apprehends to be the cause of truth, and animated by the thoughts of the divine presence and protection, will learn to say of bonds and imprisonments, and even of tortures, as St. Paul did, *None of these things move me*, in such a cause, *neither count I my life dear unto me* †. As Mr. Boyle very justly and finely expresses it‡: "Personal sufferings, which a well-meaning man undergoes for his conscience, are but such a kind of burden to his mind, as feathers to an eagle or a falcon; which though in themselves considered they have a weight, in the situation in which they are placed about him, enable him to soar towards heaven, and to reach a height which makes him

* James iii. 16. † Acts xx. 24. ‡ Occas. Medit. p. 147.

praised and wondered at by beholders." Nay, perhaps where there is no true religion, a native sense of honour in a generous mind may encourage it to endure some hardships for the cause of truth; not to say that sometimes on the principles we hinted above, "Obstinacy may rise as the understanding is oppressed, and continue its opposition for a while, merely to avenge the cause of its injured liberty *."

And it is farther to be remembered, that where the persecution is not very extreme, and sometimes even where it is, spectators are brought to judge more favourably of the cause thus violently opposed, when they observe the fortitude with which the patrons of it endure hardships and severities, from which they might otherwise deliver themselves at so easy a rate. Thus Tertullian boasts to Scapula, under all the butcheries he exercised at Carthage; "Our sect, says he, is built up by your endeavours to destroy it. The very sight of our patience in sufferings awakens men's consciences to enquire into the cause of it; and that enquiry leads them to discover the truth, and embrace it, even though it expose them to the same sufferings †." This made the blood of the martyrs, what it was so often called, the seed of the church. And something of the same spirit has appeared in succeeding ages. Now in proportion to the degree in which a prohibited religion spreads, persecution must spread and propagate itself, and its desolations. And at this rate, if the persecution be severe, as it must be in order to a victory, how many persons, how many families, must be undone by it? For it is apparent, that in many instances what one suffers for the case of his conscience, draws ruin on a family, perhaps on many families dependent on him, wherein some may hardly know their right-hand from their left. I might also mention the encouragement hereby given to informers, who generally in such cases are the vilest and most infamous of mankind: and might discourse copiously on the animosities hereby raised amongst neighbours, on the discouragement of honest industry, and the injury done to trade and commerce ‡. But I rather

* Ludolph's Ethiop. p. 358.

† Nec tamen deficiet hæc secta quam tunc magis ædificari scias cum cædi videtur. Quisque enim tantam tolerantiam spectans, ut aliquo scrupulo percussus & inquirere accenditur, quid sit in causa, & ubi cognoverit veritatem, & ipse statim sequitur.—Tert. ad Scap. ad fin.

‡ I doubt not but on this occasion many of my readers will recollect that the Dutch were some of the first protestant states which allowed a universal toleration; to which, as Sir William Temple most justly observes, "they owe the continued and undisturbed peace of their government, and the mighty increase of their people; wherein will appear to consist chiefly the vast growth of their trade, and riches; and consequently, the strength and greatness of their state."

Temple's Netherl. C. v. p. 208.

chuse to refer these and many more calamities, which stream forth from this bitter fountain, to your own reflection, which may easily enlarge on the melancholy subject.

Now when so much must be sacrificed to public orthodoxy and uniformity, who can wonder if such a degree of oppression make a wise man mad, and force multitudes into desperate measures, most destructive to the community? Who can wonder if an injured and persecuted people rise up, I will not say in rebellion, for it deserves not that infamous name, but in a just and generous vindication of their liberties; and even when the event is most hazardous, chuse rather to die warm with their swords in their hands, than to perish perhaps by the artificial cruelties of a lingering execution, or to starve in the darkness and solitude of a dungeon?

How many wars, and how great confusions have by this means arisen in Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, the Low Countries, and various other places, even since the opening of the reformation; it is not for a few moments, or indeed a few hours, to recount. But I take it for granted, that few of you are entirely unacquainted with these things, which make up one of the most instructive, though at the same time, the most melancholy parts of history. As the consequence of all, it has generally been found both at home and abroad, that ecclesiastical and civil tyranny has been either established or expelled together; and that wherever this dragon has kept its seat, it has devoured the glory of the land around it, and heaped infamy and misery on its inhabitants. It has marked its way by desolations; so that one may well apply to the bands of persecutors, what Joel says of the armies of locusts and caterpillars, when the country is *Like the garden of Eden before them*, it is *behind them a desolate wilderness**. And surely were not the remainder of their wrath to be restrained, religion and truth would be buried in the ruins. Which leads me to add,

5. The christian religion, which we here suppose to be the cause of truth, must, humanly speaking, be not only obstructed but destroyed, should persecuting principles universally prevail.

Let us for argument's sake suppose, what I am sure we have no reason to believe, that in some particular countries it might be a means of promoting and establishing the purity of the gospel, yet it must surely be a great impediment to its progress. What wise prince, who was a heathen or a mahometan, would ever admit christian preachers, if he knew that it was a principle of

* Joel ii. 3.

their religion, that as soon as the majority of the people were converted by arguments, the rest, and himself amongst them, if he continued obstinate, must be proselyted or extirpated by fire and sword? Surely if this were known to be the case, the secular power would at once seize on such missionaries as public enemies, and condemn the whole sect on this single tenet, whatever their other doctrines or precepts might be.

Nay farther, if it be, as the advocates for persecution generally suppose, a dictate of the law of nature, that the true religion is to be propagated by the sword, then it is certain that a mahometan or an idolater with the same notion, supposing himself to have truth on his side, as no doubt many of them do suppose, and also admitting the principle we contest, must think himself obliged in conscience, if he have an opportunity to do it, to arm his powers for the extirpation of christianity. Thus a holy war must commence over the face of the whole earth, in which nothing but a miracle could render christians successful against so vast a disproportion in numbers. Now I think it hard to believe that to be a truth, which would naturally lead to the extirpation of truth in the world; or that a divine religion should carry in its bowels the principle of its own destruction.

If these reasonings be admitted, then persecution will by the light of nature appear so absurd, so unjust, and so mischievous a thing, that it ought to be rejected with abhorrence; unless it should be warranted and required by a divine revelation, which had such degrees of evidence as should be sufficient to overbalance that strong objection against it, which would arise from the consideration we have now been urging. But on this head we need have no apprehension, for I am to shew you,

6. That persecution is so far from being required, or encouraged by the gospel, that it is most directly contrary to many of its precepts, and indeed to the whole genius of it.

A mahometan may perhaps prove from his Alcoran *, that the true faith is to be propagated by the sword, and that heretics and unbelievers are to be cut off or made tributary; but if a christian plead in favour of persecution, while he has his New Testament in his hand, in an intelligible language, he must be condemned out of his own mouth. It is condemned by the example of Christ, *Who went about doing good* †, *who came not to destroy men's lives but to save them:* who waved the exercise of his miraculous power against his enemies, not only in this instance in the text, but even when they most unjustly and

* Alcoran, Cap. 2, 4, 5, ad pass. † Acts x. 38.

cruelly assaulted him*; and never exerted it in one single instance that we read of, to inflict death or any corporal punishment even on those who had almost justly deserved it: his doctrine also as well as his example has taught us, to be harmless as doves, to *Love our enemies*, to *do good to them that hate us, and* to *pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us* †. And will a maxim like that allow us to persecute others? When Peter desired leave to smite with the sword, though drawn in so just a cause, Christ commanded him to *Put it up in its sheath* again ‡; and he declared before Pilate, that *His kingdom was not of this world* §; which he expressly mentions as a reason why he did not arm secular power to plant or to defend it.

As for the apostles they declared, agreeably to the example and precepts of their master, that the power they had received was *For edification and not for destruction* ‖, that *The weapons of their warfare were not carnal*¶, *And* that *the servant of the Lord*, the christian minister, *was not to strive, but in meekness to instruct those who opposed themselves* **. They inculcated it as of the highest importance, that religion must be a *Reasonable service* ††, and that *Bodily exercise*, which is the utmost persecution can extort, *profited* but *little* ‡‡, and was a thing of a most different nature from true godliness. *That* the *strong ought to bear* with *the infirmities of the weak* §§. And in a word, that christians must in the whole of their conversation be *Harmless*, as well as holy and undefiled, *in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shining amongst them*, by these amiable examples, *as lights in the world*, and so hold *forth the word of life* ‖‖.

You well know, that these passages are but a little specimen of those which might be produced on such an occasion. Most prudently therefore do the popish clergy wrest the New Testament out of the hands of their people, before they venture to arm them with a sword, to destroy others for their religious opinions.

These are the principal arguments against persecution which have occurred to my mind. You easily see they are chiefly pointed at high severities; but if you consider them attentively, you will find that they proportionably conclude against

* John xviii. 6. † Mat. v. 44. ‡ John xviii. 11. § John xviii. 36.
‖ 2 Cor. x. 8. ¶ 2 Cor. x. 4. ** 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. †† Rom. xii. 1.
‡‡ 1 Tim. iv. 8. §§ Rom. xv. 1. ‖‖ Phil. ii. 15, 16.

every degree of it, not excepting the lightest pecuniary fines, or civil incapacities. I am,

III. To touch on the chief arguments which are urged in defence of penal laws enacted for the pretended security and advancement of religion.

Persecution is so harsh and so infamous a word, that few will defend it. But under this milder name they maintain the thing, by pleading the glory of God and the good of mankind, (sacred prostituted names) the penal laws of the Jewish constitution, and a few tortured passages of the New Testament; which one would think mentioned to expose the cause, rather than seriously to serve it.

1. The glory of God is generally pleaded as an apology for persecution.

The time is come, when those that slay his servants are supposing they offer him an acceptable service. "God, say they, is the God of truth; and therefore the cause of truth is his cause; and the magistrate, who is in his sphere the *Minister of God**, is to be a *Nursing Father*† to his church, and to point the sword he has received from him against those impious persons, who will no otherwise be restrained from *perverting the right ways of the Lord.*"

Now it is most evident, this is taking for granted the innocence and morality of the thing in the general, as well as the infallibility of the magistrate, or of the priest, whose executioner he must be. But if, as we have endeavoured to prove above, persecution in general is contrary to the light of nature and to the christian revelation, it must be great impiety to pretend to consecrate it to the divine glory. And a man might on the same principle lie and plunder, or even murder his neighbour, could he but persuade himself that God would be honoured, as the truth might be promoted by it, and take it for granted that the goodness of the end must sanctify the badness of the means. Paul evidently determines the matter otherwise, when he introduces a man as excusing his own lie, by its tendency to promote the truth of God; and overrules that plea by observing, that if it were allowed, we might *Do evil that good may come.* Which he accounted so abominable a maxim, that he says that the *damnation of such is just*‡.

Yet, after all, if the preceding arguments were to be waved, and we were to begin our enquiry with examining what would be most for the glory of God, and the advancement of truth, I

* Rom. xiii. 4. † Isa. xlix. 23. ‡ Rom. iii. 8.

am fully persuaded, that persecution, instead of being established, must, on this foundation, be exploded, and condemned. For, not to repeat what I said above, of the improbability of fixing any rational conviction by this means; it is plainly a dishonour to truth, and therefore to God, to suppose, that it needs the supports of secular terrors, and that its enemies must be suppressed by violence. We then *Sanctify the Lord* our *God in our hearts*, when we are *ready to give an answer to those that enquire* into the foundations of our religion, and our *hope, with meekness and fear* *; and when we use those methods with others, which are likely most effectually to engage them to render him a rational service. But when we drag men to his altars, as unwilling victims, and attempt to bind them otherwise than *With* the *cords of a man, and* the *bonds of love* †, he may surely reject our forward and officious zeal, as an affront; and say, *Who has required these things at your hands* ‡? The same answer will, in a great measure, serve for the second plea in favour of persecution: which is,

2. That it may tend to promote the happiness of mankind.

If we will believe those, who have sometimes a crocodile's tear to shed over those whom they are devouring, all the severity they use to men's bodies, is in mere mercy to their souls. But it is hard to say, how this can be an argument for putting them to death, in what they call a damnable error; as an ill-natured man may call any error, and an inquisitor must, of course, call that which he makes capital. I know they will answer, it is for the good of others, that they may be deterred from the like pestilent heresy. But I endeavoured to shew before, that such a course was much more likely to prejudice and to exasperate, and to debauch men's minds, than to recover or secure them. And here their most plausible answer is, that though it should be granted, that the first converts of violence are insincere, yet at least succeeding generations, being educated in the bosom of the church, and the forms of the true religion, may cordially imbibe it, even to their everlasting salvation. A rich equivalent, as some may think, for the present inconveniences to others! But I see not that we can be obliged to introduce so much confusion and misery in our own days, out of regard to posterity, any more than to burn up the produce of our own fields and plantations, that the ashes may meliorate the soil, and render it more fruitful to those that come after us.

* 1 Peter iii. 15. † Hos. xi. 4. ‡ Isa. i. 12.

If such an expedient were not likely to answer, even that end, it illustrates the subject so much the more. For we may naturally expect to find, in the hearts of children, a deep resentment of the wrong done to their parents, and even to their remoter ancestors: nor is it any uncommon case at all, for an aversion or attachment to particular notions and forms, to prove hereditary; especially when young persons, so exceedingly jealous of their liberty, as at their age they are, apprehend a religion to be forced upon them, contrary to that which their ancestors bravely defended, at the expence of their estates and their lives; or which they unwillingly seemed to renounce, for the preservation of them. It is exceeding probable, that the penal laws, by which idolatry was imposed on the Jews, in some years of the Babylonish captivity, might contribute greatly to give them that aversion to it, which has been transmitted through so many following ages. And the contempt, which both the Spaniards and Portuguese put on those whom they call new christians, that is, whose ancestors, most of them above two hundred years ago*, were obliged, by violence, to profess christianity, seems plainly to intimate, that they secretly suspect them to be Jews or Mahometans in their hearts, as many of themselves declare themselves to be, when they escape into a land of liberty †

Yet, perhaps, many of more pious dispositions, and more tender tempers than those of whom I have been now speaking, may be ready to plead, that unlimited toleration will leave room for writing and publishing the most pernicious books; whereby the principles of young and unexperienced minds may easily be corrupted, and heresy and profaneness introduced into the rising generation; and, with it that licentiousness of practice, which generally attends such an apostacy from the truth.

I acknowledge, that the plea seems to have a considerable

* The Moriscos were expelled Spain, A. D. 1792, and the inquisition erected about four years after.

† It is very remarkable to this purpose, that Orobio the jew, in his conference with Limborch, freely acknowledges, That, in Spain and Portugal, all the monasteries and nunneries are full of jews: that many canons, inquisitors, and bishops, being descended from jewish parents, are still jews in their hearts; though, for temporal advantages, they profess to be christians. Some of these, he says, repent, and, if they can, escape into other countries; of which he himself was one: who confesses, he had often complied with the idolatries of the place.—Ego qui toties miser genua Baali flexi, peccatum meum ego recordor, &c. Jud. Script. Test. No. 4. p. 102. And Limborch afterwards declares, that Orobio had himself owned, that the jews in Spain are taught by their parents, that, in order to escape the inquisition, it is lawful to profess christianity, while they deny it in their hearts; and to confirm that profession by swearing on the cross, and by eating swine's flesh, &c. Limb. Resp. ad Scrip. III. Cap. V. p. 178.

weight; but I desire it may be seriously examined, whether the mischief of such a restraint be not yet greater than the advantages of it? Might not the most excellent and useful writings of the best men be suppressed on this principle? Nay, is it not on this principle, that the bible itself is prohibited in popish countries? Some inconveniences arise from every imaginable constitution: it is the part of wisdom to choose that which is attended by the fewest and the least, and to apply the most proper remedies to them. If toleration be abused, as the means of sowing tares amongst the wheat, let it teach all, and especially those who have the care of young persons, to be so much the more watchful over their charge, to keep them out of the way of infection, or to furnish them with proper antidotes against it. But let not those, who would approve themselves the patrons of truth, act as if they thought religion such a scandalous cause, that it must suffer by the freedom of inquiry, and could only be safe under the covert of darkness.

On the whole, let the friends of the truth fairly propose its evidences, and shew its influence too, by the candor of their temper, and the benevolence and usefulness of their lives; and if its enemies raise objections, as against what cause may not objections be raised? Let us give them a fair consideration, and endeavour to expose the sophistry and weakness of them, in a plain, rational and convincing manner, in the spirit of meekness and serenity. We may then hope, through the concurrent influences of divine grace, that the souls of men will be established, even by the attempts made to pervert them; and that, in another sense than the apostle originally intended the phrase, *The trial of that faith, which is far more precious than* the purest *gold, (which,* in succeeding ages, *perishes* and wears out, *though it have been tried in the fire) will be found to praise and glory* *. And if, which may very probably be the case, some who will eagerly listen to every objection against the truth, will not have the patience to hear or examine its defence, we must leave them to the final judgment of *Him, who searches the hearts, and tries the reins* of the children of men †. With so dishonest a temper, a name, or a form, whatever it had been, could have done them but very little good. It is impossible for us to save men against their own wills: and I cannot see, that it will be any part of christian charity, to put out their eyes, or tie up their hands, lest they should use them to the injury of themselves or others.

If any should pretend, that we are to punish heretics, and

* 1 Pet. i. 7. †Jer. xi, 20. Rev. ii. 23.

infidels, that we may not make ourselves partakers of other men's sins, and draw down the judgments of God on the nation in which we live: I answer, that this argument so evidently takes it for granted, that persecution is for the glory of God, and will be a proper expedient for promoting the true religion, that what I have said, under the former heads, is an abundant answer to it. I shall not therefore enlarge on this as a distinct topic, but proceed to another of much greater importance.

3. The most plausible argument, in favour of the doctrine we oppose, is taken from the penal laws, which made a part of the Jewish constitution.

It is urged here, that God did, in the strongest terms, expressly appoint, that all who taught or practised idolatry amongst the Jews, should be punished with death*; and that many severe executions were accordingly done on this statute: not only by the prophet *Elijah*†, an extraordinary divine messenger, but likewise by *Jehu*‡, and *Josiah*§, and other princes amongst them ‖; who, far from being censured, were applauded and rewarded on this account.

If we answer here, as we most easily and naturally do, that the merciful genius of the christian dispensation is so different from the rigour and severity of the Mosaic law, that no argument can be drawn from the one to the other; it is pleaded, that this will at least serve to overthrow the greater part of our discourse, which was intended to prove the natural absurdity and immorality of persecution; unless we will allow, what surely no christian can, that a natural immorality was made an essential part of a divine institution.

It will be proper, therefore, to examine this matter a little more largely; which I shall the rather do, because I think it has seldom been handled with the accuracy which it requires. Now, I apprehend, the solution of this difficulty will depend on considering, on the one hand, the limitations attending these penal laws; and, on the other, the peculiar circumstances of the Jews, to whom they were given.

1. Let us consider the limitations which attended these penal laws.

They affected only the inhabitants of the land of Canaan; and animadverted only on some overt act, whereby they publicly declared a revolt from God to idols.

There was no commission given to the Jews, to arm themselves for the propagation of their faith amongst their heathen

* Deut. xiii. 6, 18. † 1 Kings xviii. 40. ‡ 2 Kings x. 25.
§ 2 Kings xxiii, 20. ‖ 2 Kings. xi, 18.

neighbours ; nor was there any express law, to pursue any Israelite with the sword, who settling among idolaters in foreign countries, should conform to the religion of them. Though, for reasons afterwards to be mentioned, his part in the land of Israel would undoubtedly have been forfeited. And, it is farther to be remembered, that even with regard to the inhabitants themselves, the law only took cognizance of some overt act of revolt. Had God given a large confession of faith to the Jews, to every article of which he had required them, on some high penalties, to subscribe their assent, a much stronger objection against what I have advanced would have arisen from such a constitution. But this was so far from being the case, that the Sadducees, erroneous as they were in some of the most important articles of natural as well as revealed religion, were not only tolerated, but, without any direct violation of the Mosaic law, were frequently promoted to offices of high dignity and authority. Now there is a most evident difference between a law thus limited, and an universal allowance of religious severities, to Jews or others, in any such circumstance as they should think fit. And, were the particular reasons ever so unknown, the former might be allowed, as consistent with the divine perfections, without laying a foundation to infer that the latter might be so. As there was an apparent difference between God's requiring Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, and his publishing a general declaration, allowing any parents whatsoever to sacrifice their children, whenever they should suppose that the glory of God, and the interest of religion, would be advanced by it. Thus the limitation of these penal laws destroys the argument which might be drawn from them, in favour of persecution in general. And, if it still appear a difficulty, that, even with these limitations, they should be enacted, I hope the point may be yet more fully cleared up, by considering,

2. The peculiar circumstances whereby the Jews were distinguished from all other people.

Now here, the extraordinary discoveries which God made of himself amongst them, and the peculiar manner in which he stood related to them, as their king, concur, both to vindicate the equity of the laws in question, and to prove that no reasonable consequence can be drawn from them, in favour of persecution, in any other nation upon earth.

It is surely of some importance, to recollect the extraordinary discoveries which God had made of himself to them, though the whole stress of the point does not lie here. The miracles which he had wrought amongst them, in order to prove

his Deity, and the vanity of idols, were of the most awakening and convincing nature; and these were not only delivered to them by credible report, as they are now delivered to us; but God was, from age to age, raising up prophets, with a power of renewing these wonders before their eyes. Nay, he had interwoven into their constitution, certain periodical, and most extensive and obvious miracles, not only in the extraordinary fruitfulness of every sixth year, when, after the ground had been exhausted in the five preceding years, the poorest harvest must naturally have been expected; but, also in the safety of their borders, though surrounded with enemies, when all the males were gone up to worship, even in the very heart of their country, as they were obliged to do three times in the year, between the beginning of March, and the end of September; which is the most proper time for armies to be abroad.

Now, God, the searcher of all hearts, might know, that nothing but obstinate and incorrigible wickedness could make a man an idolater, in such circumstances as these. And consequently, he might righteously condemn him to death, and appoint his fellow-creatures to execute the sentence. But no argument can be drawn from thence for inflicting the like punishment on another person, who is not as expressly sentenced by the divine law, and whose opportunities of better knowledge are not, and cannot be entirely the same.

But it is farther to be considered, as of the utmost weight in the present argument, that God also stood in a peculiar relation to the people of Israel, as he was their temporal king, as well as their God. Their government, as you well know, was different from that of all other nations: it was indeed a Theocracy, as Josephus very justly calls it; their whole system of civil laws being enacted by God, and their magistrates appointed by him. And when they came to have kings, as other nations had, yet even these kings were to be considered but as the viceroys of God: as appears by their being obliged to transcribe his law, when they begun their reign; to consult his oracle on all extraordinary exigences; and, from his interposing in various cases both in Judah and Israel, to transfer the crown from one person and family, to another.

Now, in consequence of this peculiar system of government, God thought it proper, as it apparently was, to annex certain temporal privileges to their obedience to him; and they held their estates, and possessions in the fine country they inhabited, not by one absolute donation to them, and their heirs for ever; but through succeeding generations, as tenants to the

crown, upon an express condition of certain homages to be paid to God, as the great proprietor; renouncing all dependance upon, and all subjection to any of his competitors. Now it was plainly equitable, that, as the counterpart of these advantages, they should be subjected to some peculiar temporal punishments; if, while they claimed these privileges, they falsified that allegiance which was the condition of them; in which case they suffered, not merely as idolaters, but as traitors.

I will further add, that as God was determined, in the course of his providence, to send national judgments upon them, in case of a national revolt to idolatry, which he accordingly always did, it was a merciful as well as just severity, thus to animadvert, upon the first appearances of this aggravated crime, to which they were strongly inclined; and by which, if it prevailed amongst them, they must be universally undone.

But, as all these circumstances were peculiar to the Jews, I hope you are, by this time, fully convinced, that it is most absurd to draw an argument in favour of religious severities in general, from the penal laws of the Mosaic institution*. I have been so large on this head, that I must only hint at those weak and contemptible arguments which are brought,

4. From some abused passages in the New Testament.

And indeed I should hardly mention them, but to expose them; and to shew to what wretched straits ingenious and interested men must be brought, when they will condescend to make use of such arguments: for, after all, to their shame I must say, the chief texts which I find produced for their purpose, by popish writers, are two; which I am persuaded, a wise and honest man might have read a thousand times before he had ever dreamt of such a consequence from them. Christ gave *Peter* a commission to *feed* his *sheep*†; and that must, say some, imply a power in the church, and especially in the pope, as the head of it, to kill wolves, that is, heretics. As if an argument, from this figurative expression, to so distant a circumstance, could be allowed against such strong evidence, both of scripture

* I have not mentioned the argument which some have brought from Job's saying, that idolatry is a *wickedness to be punished by the judge*, Job xxxi. 28. because it is so evident that Job speaks unadvisedly with his lips, in some instances, as he himself owns, Job xl. 3—8. xlii. 3—6. And I think, if we grant there were in his days such a law in Arabia, as made idolatry capital, it can never be proved of divine institution from these words, any more than it can be argued from Judah's sentence against Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 24. that there was then a divine law for executing women while they were big with child.

† John xxi. 15—17.

and reason. But I must do them the justice to say, their grand argument is behind: and it is couched in those words, *Compel them to come in**. But, what compulsion and violence must be offered to these words, before they will be of any service in the cause of persecution! How often have they been told, that this relates only to friendly importunity, like that which the disciples used to engage Christ to spend the evening with them at Emmaus, when, as the evangelist expresses it, *They constrained him* †? And how absurd it would be to suppose servants sent out with sword in hand to force in guests to an entertainment, I think you will easily apprehend ‡. Another argument a little more specious than either of these might be brought from the corporal punishments inflicted on blasphemers in the apostle's times §, but it is to be considered that these were the effects of a miraculous power, and consequently had a proper tendency to convince the understanding of the sufferers and spectators, of the divine mission of those with whom the hand of the Lord thus remarkably was. It is therefore most absurd to talk of substituting the power of the magistrate instead of these extraordinary penalties, unless the magistrate can inflict them the same way; and then we will acknowledge they merit not the name of persecution, but come under that singular exception which we admitted in the beginning of the discourse.

I have the pleasure to assure you that these wretched arguments, or rather empty shadows of argument, are the most material which I have seen produced from the New Testament in favour of religious severities. It is the glory of that sacred book, that it affords no better arguments in so infamous a cause. And I cannot forbear observing, that the silence of the New Testament on this head is a strong argument against persecution, and would have been so, had the apostles omitted the many passages before quoted, in which they seem directly to oppose it.

I know it may be said, the sacred writers did not advise the primitive christians to use violence, because their religion was then in its infancy, and they had no power in their hands. Yet, one would imagine, that if the apostles would have approved

* Luke xiv. 23. † Luke xxiv. 29.

‡ I think the word ανάγκαζω occurs but nine times in the New Testament, Mat. xiv. 22. Mark vi. 45. Luke xiv. 23. Acts xxvi. 2. xxviii. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 11. Gal. ii. 3, 14. vi. 12. It is only in the 4th and 5th of these places, that it can refer to the use of secular power. Παραβιαζομαι is used twice, Luke xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15. and in both those places can signify no more than friendly importunity.

§ Acts v. 5, 10. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. v. 13. 1 Tim. i. 20.

themselves honest men on the scheme we oppose, they should have laid in some directions for future times, and have instructed christians in the use of their secular power, when it was obtained; as the Jews were particularly directed in the management of theirs. Especially since this is a case in which *the wrath of man, which worketh not the righteousness of God*, is so ready to *throw about firebrands, arrows and death.*

Nor will it here be improper to remind you that there was at least one prince converted to christianity in the apostles' time; I mean Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus: yet we do not find St. Paul exhorting him to proselyte his subjects by violence, or even to inflict any penalties on Elymas the sorcerer, though he had been convicted of error in so miraculous a way, and though an inspired apostle had called him, in his presence, a *Child of the devil* and an *enemy of all righteousness* *.

I must also add here, that it is well known, masters amongst the Greeks and Romans had an unlimited power over the persons and lives of their slaves. Now if corporal severities were ordinarily to have been used to promote the gospel, we might have expected that the apostles writing, as they so often do, of the duty of masters, should have added some exhortations to them to compel their slaves to embrace it. Yet nothing of that kind occurs, which I think makes the negative arguments as strong as one can well suppose a negative argument to be.

IV. I must conclude my discourse with touching on those reflections which I have left myself but little time to enlarge upon.

1. Let us bless God that we are free from the guilt of persecuting others, and the misery of being persecuted ourselves.

Had we been born in Spain or Portugal, education and example might have corrupted our judgment so much, that without farther inquiry we might have taken it for granted, as a first principle, as many there seem to do, that heretics are to be punished with death. And on this foundation we might have practised or applauded the greatest inhumanities, perhaps towards the best of men. We might have been presenting to God what is much worse than robbery, even murder for a burnt-offering: and trusting in that for the expiation of our other offences, which is itself in the number of the greatest enormities which human nature can commit. In such a case I fear the blindness and ignorance of our zeal would not have been allowed as an

* Acts xiii. 10.

excuse for its pernicious consequences. St. Paul calls himself the *Chief of sinners* for those severities which he exercised on christians *ignorantly* *, and while he *Verily thought* that it was his duty to *do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth* †. And indeed, as Mr. Baxter well expresses it, in his masculine and lively manner ‡, "If charity be a grace most necessary to salvation, then certainly it will not keep any man from damnation, that he had malice and uncharitableness enough to persuade him, that the members of Christ were children of the devil, though he persecuted them under that notion."

Let us be thankful that we are preserved from that guilt, and let us also acknowledge it as an instance of the divine goodness to us, that we are not suffering by persecution; that we are not plundered and banished, or perhaps imprisoned and tortured for conscience-sake; and so brought under a formidable temptation, to make shipwreck of that as well as of faith. Let this day remind us of the frequent dangers of this kind to which we have been exposed: and let us gratefully own God's watchful care over us, and that powerful hand exerted in our favour, to which we owe it, that *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers*, which was once and again spread for our lives, *the snare is broken and we are escaped* §. Let the memory of those who were the glorious instruments of our deliverance be ever dear to us, and the persons of those who under God are the great guardians of our civil and religious liberties, be regarded with becoming reverence, affection and obedience.

2. Let us envy none that liberty of conscience which they enjoy, on such equitable principles.

While we rejoice in a toleration ourselves, we were inexcusable if we were grieved that many who most widely differ from us share in the same common benefit. A variety of opinions must be expected, and debates will unavoidably arise from it; but when we are pressed by the arguments of our opponents, or, it may be, provoked by what we think their obstinacy; let us not indulge even a secret wish, that there were a sword in our hand to slay them, or a chain to bind them. Far from complaining of it as an evil, let us rather rejoice in it as the peculiar glory and happiness of our age and country, perhaps beyond any other, that our neighbours, as well as we, enjoy a freedom of choosing their religion for themselves; and amidst all the

* 1 Tim. i. 13—15. † Acts xxvi. 9. ‡ Baxt. Pract. Works, Vol. I. p. 612.
§ Psalm cxxiv. 7.

diversity of that choice, *Sit every one under his own vine and fig-tree*, and have none on that account to *make them afraid**.

And I will add, let not private malice and uncharitableness assume the place of public severities. Let those who are in the superior relations of life, lay aside a rigorous and imposing temper, towards those who are under their care. In matters of conscience let not the husband pretend to determine for the wife, nor the parent for the child, nor the master for the servant; but if fair argument and love will not fix a conviction on their mind in favour of what we apprehend to be right, let us leave them to worship God in their own way, without absolutely insisting upon it that they should do it in ours.

Once more, let not neighbours and equals be severe on one another upon account of religious differences, but make the most candid allowances which the case will bear for the errors and weaknesses of each other. Far from injuring and reviling each other, and refusing the mutual offices of humanity and friendship, let us study to abound in them more and more. Let us pray, that if any are otherwise minded than truth, reason and scripture would teach, God would in his own method, and time reveal unto them whatever it may be of importance for them to know; and in the mean time let us endeavour to act on the great principles of virtue and benevolence, which, blessed be God, are not peculiar to any distinguishing forms of religious profession amongst us. And I heartily pray, that domestic persecution may never be the guilt or the misery of any, who by the laws of our country are protected from public violence.

Lastly, Let us be very cautious that we do not abuse that religious liberty which, by the singular favour of providence, we enjoy.

Let us remember, that as the best blessings may be perverted, it is too possible that even this may be turned into licentiousness. It is true, that our consciences are under no human jurisdiction, but let it be considered they are not without law, but under law, to God. He who searches men's hearts, knows how to judge of the sincerity and impartiality of our inquiries into truth, though none else can do it. Let us therefore be wary in our determinations in matters of importance, and let us earnestly pray for the enlightening influences of God's Holy Spirit, to preserve us from erroneous principles, and superstitious worship.

* Mic. iv. 4.

And, once more, let us be very careful that we do not abuse our religious liberties by trifling with opportunities for spiritual improvement, either absenting ourselves from them, or attending them in a careless and unprofitable manner. Let us remember, *The servant who knows his master's will, and prepares not himself to act according to it, will be beaten with many stripes* *. The freest profession of the purest religion on earth will signify nothing, if it be no more than a profession; and all that zeal for liberty which is consistent with being the slave of sin, is only a natural haughtiness of spirit, which will aggravate a man's guilt rather than extenuate it. The Lord grant that none of us may reject the truth, and that none may hold it in unrighteousness: lest the time come, when we wish for that excuse which they will have, who have known the restraints and discouragements of persecutions; and another day reflect with horror, even on those repeated deliverances, for which we are this day returning our public acknowledgments.

* Luke xii. 47.

# SERMONS

AT

# ORDINATIONS,

*&c.*

# SERMON VII.

## DELIVERANCE OUT OF THE HANDS OF OUR ENEMIES,

*Urged as a Motive to Obedience, in the Substance of two Sermons, preached at Northampton, February 9, 1745-6, on Occasion of the precipitate Flight of the Rebels from Stirling a few Days before.*

Luke i. 74, 75.—*That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*

I SHOULD think myself inexcusable, if, after having addressed you with so many admonitions, and so many encouragements, through the whole period of our late public alarms, I should be silent as to the favourable turn, which our affairs seem now to be taking; and did not lead you to greet these first openings of deliverance which God is giving us, with your earliest hymns of grateful praise. Far be it from any of us to resemble the *nine lepers* *, who though they had been so loud in their cries for mercy under their affliction as to be heard afar off, yet having received their cure returned not to give glory to God. I am indeed sensible, that our deliverance is not yet complete. Though our enemies are fled with so much precipitation before our forces, led on by that heroic prince whom providence has raised so gloriously to command them, we are not as yet *putting off our harness* †. But we have reason to hope, that the end of girding it on is in a great measure answered; and it is certain, that a becoming acknowledgment of these beginnings of mercy, will be the most probable means to secure the full accomplishment of our hopes. I have therefore chosen the words before us, with a particular view to this great and happy event; and it is obvious, that they will naturally lead me into suitable and important reflections upon it.

You will easily recollect, that they are part of that celebrated song, in which Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist,

* Luke xvii. 12—18. † 1 Kings xx. 11.

uttered his joys and his hopes on the birth of such a son, and in which he employed and consecrated the first accents of his recovered speech. This venerable priest, under the influence of the prophetic Spirit, *blesses the God of Israel, who had raised up a horn of salvation*, that is who was just raising a powerful Saviour, *for them, in the house of his servant David;* whose office and glory it should be, *to perform the mercy promised to their fathers*, the substance of which he comprehends in the words of my text; and thus to complete what he had so often engaged in effect, though not in express words, that Israel under his auspicious government, *being delivered out of the hands of their enemies, and of all them that hated them, should serve him without fear, in* a steady course of *holiness and righteousness before him.*

I will not take upon me to determine the exact idea, which Zacharias himself had to these words; whether he meant to refer to that great salvation from our spiritual enemies, which Christ gives, and to those influences of his Spirit on the hearts of his people, whereby they are effectually engaged to a persevering course of *holiness and righteousness;* or whether he might have his eye to some expected conquest over that Gentile power, by which Israel was then held in subjection, and to a temporal kingdom to be established in consequence of it, in which *righteousness* should reign in a more remarkable manner, than it had ever before done among the children of men. He, like others of the prophets, after having delivered their divine oracles, might have need of *Searching what the Spirit of Christ did* particularly *signify* therein *. But it is evident, that whether we take it in the one or the other of these views, it will afford us a just foundation for two remarks, most suitable to our present circumstances:——That to be *delivered out of the hands of our enemies* is a great favour of divine providence;——and that it loudly calls for a course of steady and cheerful obedience to God as our great benefactor.

It will therefore be very agreeable to the general sentiments expressed in these words, that I should,

First, Endeavour to make you sensible of the *greatness of this deliverance*, which God has now granted us *out of the hands of our enemies.* And,

Secondly, Represent and enforce that return, which he most reasonably demands from us, and to which the text may naturally direct our thoughts.

* 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

Such representations are undoubtedly necessary: I pray God, they may in this instance be as effectual, as they are sincere. I am,

First, To endeavour to make you sensible of the *greatness of this deliverance*, which God has now granted us, by the panic with which he seems to have struck the leaders and abettors of that unnatural rebellion, which he hath permitted to arise amongst us; that so our hearts may be disposed to those returns of gratitude which he demands.

Now to this purpose I shall consider it,——first, in a more general view;——and then, in some particular circumstances, which may farther heighten our grateful sense of it.

I. I would consider the *deliverance out of the hands of our enemies*, which God is now opening upon us, in a more general view.

Here I shall take a view of it in general, with regard to the aspect which it has——upon our substance,——our liberties,——our religion,——and our posterity. And each view will convince us of its importance, and do its part towards awakening our gratitude.

To make you more sensible of this, let me now lead you to imagine, though the imagination is painful and shocking, what must have been our case, if the progress of the rebellious arms of our enemies had been carried on with a rapidity, like that which they at first boasted; if they had been supported by powerful succours from abroad; and if, according to their vain hopes, considerable numbers from the southern part of our island had joined them; so that they had marched on to our capital, and taken possession of it, either destroying or driving away that illustrious prince whom God has set over us, and those numerous branches of his royal family around him, whom we have so long beheld with delight as the pledges of peace and happiness to succeeding generations. Consider, how our possessions, and liberties, our religion, and posterity, would have been affected by such an event; and then judge, what an aspect our deliverance has upon each.

1. As to our worldly substance.

This, among so many dearer names, may seem less worthy of our mention. A generous and manly spirit will indeed bear the diminution of it with a calm steadiness; and the true *Christian*

will be conscious of *a better and a more enduring substance**, laid up beyond the reach of violence and rapine. Yet some value is justly to be set on what we here possess, as the gift of providence, and as that by which we are enabled, not only to make some comfortable provision for those whom God has committed to our immediate care, but likewise to do good to many others, by a variety of humane and charitable actions, which may greatly adorn our religious profession. And whether our wealth be the acquisition of our own industry, or have descended to us by inheritance from our fathers, there is something in each of these considerations, which makes the loss of it grievous; how gradually soever it may be impaired, and though no circumstance of external violence deprive us of it, but we seem, according to the remarkable expression of the prophet, *To put our money into a bag with holes*†. Much more grievous then must it be, to be stripped on a sudden, and above all, in such a way; to see our enemies possessed of what we just before called our own, and perhaps taking a malicious pleasure, not only to use, but to destroy it before our eyes.

The great Author of our nature, who most fully knows its frame, does sometimes mention this among the saddest consequences of invasion and conquest. So the distress and vexation of it is pathetically represented, in the message he sent to Israel by Moses, *Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof; thine ass*, the usual beast of burden among them, and answering to our ordinary horses, *shall be violently taken away before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: Thy sheep shall be given to thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them: The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not, eat up: So that thou shalt be mad, for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see*‡.

While our enemies have been traversing the northern part of our island, and penetrating even to its centre, thousands have known the literal accomplishment of these words. And I hope, we shall never forget, that *the cup* was just *passing to us:* So that had not God, and that brave prince whom he made the instrument of our deliverance, turned them back, they had in a few hours entered our houses with haughty violence: And had we staid till they arrived there, we might have beheld our provisions greedily devoured, yea profusely wasted; perhaps too, had we not been sufficiently obsequious to these detestable inmates, our furniture wantonly destroyed; our houses plundered;

* Heb. x. 34. † Hag. i. 6. ‡ Deut. xxviii. 31, 33, 34.

our very garments stripped off; and beyond all peradventure, heavy contributions levied, the amount of which in one day might have been much greater, than the necessary taxes which the legislature, though with reluctance, are compelled for the public safety to demand; or than charity to the families of those who are gone out to *fight our battles*, inclines us voluntarily to advance for their support. This might have been our fate, in their march towards our capital; and in a more extreme degree, in their return. And when this tumultuous scene had been over, what could we have expected, but much heavier exactions, than even the present distress requires? With this painful difference, that instead of advancing our money for the assistance of those who guard and defend us, it must then have been given as a reward to our oppressors and spoilers; I had almost said, as a fee to our executioners. When therefore you enter your peaceful habitations, when you sit down to your plentiful tables, and repose yourselves as *under your own vines and fig-trees*, remember to whom you owe it, that you can call them your own, and be thankful for this *deliverance out of the hands of your enemies:* A deliverance, which will be felt in proportion to the degree in which it is considered; and which we are next to view,

2. In the aspect which it bears on our liberties.

As bondage renders plenty and magnificence tasteless to a generous spirit; so poverty itself puts on a cheerful smile under the blessings of liberty, which makes, if I may allude to the words of David, *A little that a* freeman *hath, better than the abundance of many* slaves *. Were liberty the portion of the whole human race, and would to God that it were, each of them should prize it as, next to religion, his choicest treasure. But it is well known, that by the proud usurpation of princes or priests, and generally by their collusive combination to support the tyranny of each other, it has been almost entirely banished from the Continent, and seems, if not to have sought its last refuge, at least to have fixed its favourite abode, in the British dominions; where it now reigns, in the person of our gracious Sovereign, as its guardian genius, who understands the rights and honours of royalty so well, as to make it his chief glory to be so. It is here, if I may be permitted so to speak, the law that rules supreme; and the greatest and best of our princes most justly esteem it the noblest point of their ambition, to be

* Psal. xxxvii. 16.

its protectors and vicegerents: As it is indeed a glorious ambition to defend a system of wise and equitable laws, which the inhabitants of Britain from age to age, in their own persons, or by their representatives, have chosen to impose on themselves and their posterity, for their common security and happiness.—And could we have borne to see them insolently trampled under foot, and arbitrary will established in their stead? I hope, we could not have endured it, while heaven had left us any force to oppose it; but that, according to the animated expression of a celebrated writer, "we should rather have chosen to die the last of British freemen, than to live the first of British slaves." Yet what but slavery could we have expected, had our throne been filled by one, trained up in the oppressive maxims of the French and the Roman courts? Who had also so many arrears to discharge, that it is absolutely impossible he should have done it, without impoverishing us to a degree which only a nation of slaves could have submitted to: For surely we must have been bound, before we could have permitted ourselves to have been stripped so bare.

Great reason indeed have we to believe, notwithstanding all his empty and absurd pretences "of establishing us in the possession of what we never lost *," that if we should ever be so unhappy as to see the pretender possessed of the power he so unreasonably claims, *The manner of our King* would be like what Samuel so strongly describes to the men of Israel †; by whom, he tells them, *their children* would be abused, and *their estates taken away*, or the product of them subjected to such impositions, that they who retained the titulary right to them, would be little better than tenants and servants to their haughty monarch. Had we, like the Israelites, ourselves concurred in *making such a king*, we might like them have reasonably expected, that *when we had cried out* under this load of oppression, *the Lord should not have heard us.*

Let us always remember, that it is our indispensable duty, to exert ourselves to the utmost to prevent so fatal a change in our constitution: And let us bless God every day of our lives, that they who were weak or wicked enough to attempt it, have found themselves *Unable to perform their enterprize* ‡; and that, through the special care of divine providence, *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers*; that *the snare*, which would have hampered us, not only to our vexation, but

* See that incomparable Discourse, intitled, The Occasional Writer; or an Answer to the Pretender's Second Manifesto, &c.

† 1 Sam. viii. 11—18. ‡ Job v. 12.

to our destruction, *is* happily *broken, and we are escaped* free and unhurt*. A simile, which in this application of it will appear more evidently just, when we survey our deliverance,

3. In the aspect which it has upon our religion.

If religion be any thing at all significant to a man, it is beyond all comparison more than every thing else. *A nation* does not easily *change its Gods*†, be they what they will: And to have merely some particular forms of a religion, in the main acknowledged to be true, obtruded contrary to a man's relish, and especially contrary to his conscience, is an insufferable evil. What then must it be, to have our religion violently torn away from us, so far as it can be torn away; to see it at least injured, oppressed, and insulted, if not immediately borne down and extirpated? That pure, holy, and perfect religion, which Christ and his apostles planted upon earth; and which our pious forefathers have delivered down to us, in all its evidence, with such faithful care, sealed with the blood of so many martyrs and confessors!—To exchange this, (or to be urged at length, by penal, perhaps by sanguinary laws, to exchange it,) and for so erroneous and superstitious, so absurd and idolatrous a heap of tenets, ceremonies, and usages, that it seems almost profaning the word to call it a religion: To give up our bibles to the flames; to lay aside this rational and devout manner of worshipping God (as we assuredly believe) in the most scriptural and acceptable way, for the unintelligible jargon of a mass; to bow down to images, as if we had been trained up in the most stupid heathenism; and to adore a piece of bread, as the Saviour of the world! How much is the thought worse than death? Yea, how beautiful must death appear, as met in opposition to such a change?

And is the supposition I am now making at all unnatural? We will make all the most candid allowances: We will suppose the disposition of all the branches of the aspiring family, which urges its divine right to rule us, to be ever so gentle: We will grant, (what indeed I verily believe,) that many who have been bred up in popery, would abhor the cruelties of persecution, and grieve to see their protestant neighbours, among whom many of them have lived so long unmolested, perishing in gaols, or expiring in flames. Yet were that corruption of christianity restored amongst us, it would not be in their power to prevent it. The iniquity is established by a law; and (as several ex-

* Ps. cxxiv. 7. † Jer. ii. 11.

cellent writers have of late very seasonably demonstrated from the most authentic authority*, persecution is grown into the very vitals of their religion, and become not only an appendix to it, but an essential part of it. And indeed its absurdities are so great, that it is difficult to imagine, how it could subsist, if it were not thus supported. At least, we evidently see this to be fact, that wherever popery has prevailed, such methods have been used; and if any protestant churches remain within its dark domains, it is plainly for want of power to destroy them: For in many places we see, they have been barbarously exterminated, where every consideration of honour and gratitude, of public faith and national interest, must have loudly demanded, that they should be tolerated and sheltered.

The present deliverance therefore strongly calls upon us, in testimony of the gratitude we owe unto the Lord our God, to *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise* †: Since we have so much reason to imagine, that if he had not put a stop to their designs, our enemies would have been advancing with hasty steps, to shut up those gates, and to make those courts desolate, or (which is far worse than desolation) to fill them with idolatrous altars. And if any should suggest, that "common policy, and indeed necessity, might have obliged them, even if they had been conquerors, to proceed by slow degrees in their attempts to compass a design of this nature;" I might answer, that no consideration of prudence can curb the sallies of blind zeal, which often calls it piety to set wisdom at defiance. I might also plead, that the first attempts of this kind must be grievous to every good man, and especially to such, as have penetration enough to see whither those attempts would naturally lead. And this remark will appear to us with a great increase of weight, when we consider,

4. The happy aspect which this deliverance wears, with respect to our posterity.

Should we suppose it possible, that we ourselves, while groaning under so many injuries and oppressions, might have been permitted to alleviate our sorrows, by attending divine ordinances in a pure and regular administration of them; yet ecclesiastical tyranny, the inseparable companion of civil, might have grown strong enough to have prohibited that attendance in

* See the Bishop of Oxford's excellent Sermon on Occasion of the Rebellion; and that lively and useful pamphlet, entitled, Great Britain's Memorial against Popery and the Pretender.

† Ps. c. 4.

the days of our children. Should the fiery trial come sooner, as it not improbably might, I am well persuaded, that religion, degenerate as the present age is, would not want its martyrs, of various denominations, ages, and circumstances. There are undoubtedly pastors who would lead on their flocks to this glorious combat, and multitudes of private christians who would bravely follow, to defend the cause of truth and piety at the stake, when they could no longer defend it in the field, and to honour it with their blood, though unable to rescue it. But our dear offspring in the tender scenes of childhood and infancy, what would they do? Into whose hands would their education fall? How easily might their unexperienced eyes be struck and enchanted with the vain glitter of superstitious worship, in a ceremonial which looks as if it were chiefly intended to amuse children! How easily might their weak minds be seduced by the sophistry of error, or their soft hearts intimidated by the threatnings of cruelty! Yet all would most assuredly be tried upon them. And perhaps, before the parents themselves were driven away or destroyed, or their hearts broken by other calamities, the inhumanity so lately practised in France might be renewed in Britain. Children might be forced out of their parents' hands, to be educated in what is so unjustly called the catholic faith; and those words of the Mosaic threatning might in a dreadful sense be fulfilled with regard to them: *Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand**. What parent's heart could bear the prospect? yea, what other humane and generous heart could bear it? And not bleed to look on these innocent victims, which must on that supposition so soon be devoted at idolatrous altars, and pass a wretched inslaved life, amidst temptations arising from their very religion itself, which might have so fatal a tendency to seduce them into the ways of eternal death!

When I reflect upon all these particulars in their connection with each other, I am inclined to repeat what I said to you in public, when this rebellion first broke out: "That considering, on the whole, all the probable consequences of things as to both worlds, it would be better, that our whole island should sink into the ocean, and all its inhabitants perish at once in that general wreck, than it should remain to be through succeeding

* Deut. xxviii. 32.

ages the theatre of such scenes, as our enemies are studying to prepare, and labouring to introduce." This at least I can most deliberately say, "That had their designs succeeded, they who seemed, and who were with regard to external blessings, the happiest of mankind, would have become of all others the most miserable." In the sad situation I have been supposing, the rich might envy the lot of those, who had no property to lose:—They who had been educated in the warmest sentiments of liberty, might think those comparatively happy, to whom the weight of chains was grown less sensible, by having been worn from their infancy:—And the parent of the most numerous and amiable family, might rather have *Blessed the womb that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck**.—Only the sacred name of religion, amidst all our miseries, would still be delightful; and the happy soul that has felt its power, would in poverty, in servitude, in captivity, or in the most immediate views of martyrdom, rejoice in the unconquerable supports and glorious prospects it administers. Yet still, by such a one, the desolation of God's sanctuary, the slaughter of his servants, the seduction of the rising generation, with the apparent hazard of the protestant cause, when the strength of Great Britain was not only taken from it, but turned against it, would be felt with the most tender agony, and make a more painful impression than could be apprehended even from all the engines of popish cruelty.

Proportionable to the grief and terror of such a prospect, is the joy of our opening deliverance, when considered in these general and most important views. But I must not forget, that I am to remind you,

II. Of some particular circumstances, which may serve farther to heighten it.

Deliverance from an enemy must be acknowledged a peculiar favour of providence,—when his character is savage, and his rage exasperated;—when his heart has been elevated with repeated success;—when deliverance has been earnestly sought by prayer;—and when it is at last given, in a manner that renders the hand of God eminently conspicuous. A few words may suffice, to shew, that each of these considerations is applicable to the case before us.

All that are acquainted with the character of our rebellious enemies from Lochaber, and the neighbouring counties, know

* Luke xxiii. 29.

that they are numbered among the fiercest and most barbarous of the Highland clans. They have so much of the disposition of banditti in their very nature, that it had been terrible to have met a company of them in times of the profoundest peace; in so much that their neighbours have long been forced to set a guard on their substance, lest these wretches should have broke in upon it, and carried it away: So that the words of Ezekiel seem the very description of them; *Brutish men, skilful to destroy* *. And to whatever distinguished politeness our neighbours on the Continent, who have joined them, may pretend, there are numerous instances in which it has appeared in fact, that their *Tender mercies are cruel* †. The nearly desperate situation of the pretender's affairs, of which they well knew this to be the decisive crisis, might also have prompted them to a severity of rage, sufficient to double all the terrors of an ordinary war. The disappointment attending a former rebellion, with the death of some of their near relations who fell in the cause, either by the sword of battle, or by that of public justice, might also exasperate particular persons: And the supposed injuries sustained through so long a series of years, by him whom they call their prince, whom they have seen exiled, disowned, abjured, and outlawed, would be a more general cause of indignation against us; and, so far as the views of policy would admit, might very probably lead them to consider the greatest extremities of military execution, as not only justifiable, but meritorious.

The success they had gained in the ever to be lamented day of Preston-Pans, together with the advantage which they seemed to have over our forces in the late action at Falkirk, would naturally tend to make them more insolent; as minds so base are always elated by prosperity, to an outrageous kind of madness. At the same time, the grief into which we were thrown by our repeated disappointments, of which their escape into Scotland was none of the least, does farther serve to render their sudden consternation and retreat at last, though their numbers are said to have amounted to above nine thousand, matter of more agreeable surprise, and more pleasing reflection. And so much the rather, as some tender minds might be ready to apprehend, that heaven itself had declared against us a few days before, in pouring down showers of wrath upon us in the day of battle, so as to damp our fires; thereby in effect disarming us of the weapons in which we trusted, and delivering our

* Ezek. xxi. 31. † Prov. xii. 10.

artillery into the enemies hands. A double pleasure must it be in such a circumstance, to view the appearance of a return of mercy: Especially,

When we see in it God's gracious answer to our repeated prayers. Often have we *Cried to the Lord in our trouble;* and he is now *saving us out of our distresses**. After long delay, he has seasonably appeared, and given us reason to own, that *He hath not turned away our prayer* from him, *nor his mercy from us*†. Justly therefore may we say, *We will love the Lord, because he hath heard our prayer and supplication; because he hath inclined his ear unto us, therefore will we call upon him as long as we live*‡. And once more, the reflection and resolution are more evidently just,

As the hand of God is so remarkably apparent in the issue of this affair. Long has he seen, and seen, I doubt not, with just displeasure, how ready we are to ascribe the glory of success to ourselves, and to boast, that our own right hand and arm have gotten us the victory. He hath therefore, if I may use the expression, been digging deep to *Hide pride from us*§, seeming to make it the care of his providence to prevent such arrogance from taking place: And the mercy is great, in proportion to that care. To God we must surely ascribe it, that our enemies did not immediately come forward on their first success, while we were unprepared for our defence, and take advantage of the terror they had spread, before the arrival of our forces from abroad. To him we must ascribe it, that the politics of France and Spain were so infatuated, that they did not attempt to invade our coasts, in the midst of that consternation which the rebel army occasioned, when it was marching into the heart of our country: Or if the delay were owing to the damage which their ships sustained in the late tempests, we owe it to the Great Sovereign of the winds and seas. And to his powerful influence, which at pleasure takes away the spirit of the boldest, we may piously ascribe that sudden panic which seized the host of our enemies, so that, though so lately flushed with some visible advantage gained over us, they did not dare to look our army in the face; but fled with the utmost precipitation, destroying their artillery, and blowing up their own ammunition, though not without some circumstances of treacherous cruelty which have justly increased their infamy.

I am sensible, there are some views in which it might have appeared more desirable, that they should have ventured a

* Psal. cvii. 13. † Psal. lxvi. 20. ‡ Psal. cxvi. 1, 2. § Job xxxiii. 17.

battle, which must in all human probability have proved fatal to them: But on the other hand, not to insist upon the possibility of another panic on our side, which, in circumstances like those in which we then appeared, we had, I hope, no just cause to apprehend, we may at least conclude, that many among them would have sold their lives dear when grown desperate, and have fought in the bitterness of their hearts. Now sure we must allow, that, after the deplorable losses we have already sustained since the war and the rebellion began, it is a very favourable circumstance, that the foe was defeated without a combat; and especially at a time, when every brave soldier, and much more every valiant and experienced officer, is, as the prophet speaks, *More precious than the gold of Ophir* *. Your own thoughts prevent me, I doubt not, in applying what I now speak, to that heroic and amiable branch of the royal family, who was to have led our forces to the field, and whose safety is so eminently, and so justly, the public care. Had God permitted the hurtful sword to have approached him, and how many swords would have been pointed at him! surely the joy of complete victory and national deliverance would hardly have been felt, and our shouts would have been turned into one universal groan. But God has preserved him from the hazards of the field, and given him to vanquish by the terror of his name †.

I hope, your hearts glow with gratitude, while you hear these imperfect hints of the many merciful circumstances, with which God hath adorned this great deliverance, and are secretly crying out, what shall we render to him for these accumulated benefits? I have not left myself time to enlarge on the answer; but I would suggest it briefly under the other general head, where I am,

Secondly, To represent and inforce the return, which God may reasonably expect from us, and which the text hints at in the concluding part: *That we might serve him without*

* Isai. xiii. 12.

* Two small incidents contributed very much to this great event. One was, that Cameron of Lochiel, the head of one of the chief clans, was wounded in the action at Falkirk, and obliged to go home; on which all his tribe went off. The other was yet more surprising: Mac Donald of Glengary, who, if I mistake not, commanded in the action at Preston-Pans, was since the battle killed accidentally by one of his own men; and all that clan going off on the loss of their head, a great desertion followed, which had, no doubt, a very great influence on that precipitation with which the rebel army fled: Though after all, it was the terror of his Royal Highness's name, that completed their consternation; so that, as a person of great eminence in those parts, from whom I had the favour to be informed of these particulars, justly observes, he might say more than Cæsar, Veni, non vidi, vici.

*fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*

I may take a just and natural occasion from hence, to exhort you——to consecrate yourselves to the service of God;——to set yourselves to walk *before him in holiness and righteousness;*——to pursue this course with cheerfulness;——and to persevere in it with unwearied constancy.

1. The deliverance which we are now receiving, calls upon us all to consecrate ourselves to the service of God.

It calls upon us, to be truly religious; to remember the blessed God as the great author of this, and every mercy; and in consequence of this, not only to address some transient acknowledgment to him, but to *serve him:* To make an unfeigned regard to him, the foundation of all our virtues, and the principle of all our actions. It particularly requires, that, conscious of our obligations to him, and our dependance upon him, we keep up a grateful commerce with him, as our Creator, our Redeemer, our Protector, and our Father; and daily address him in *prayer* and *praise*, as those who know that we are unto him a holy *priesthood*, and *a peculiar people* *. Let those therefore, who have neglected these important and delightful exercises, set themselves to approach the blessed God, through the great Mediator, and make a dedication of themselves to him, that their services may be accepted: Let those who have already done it, renew it with pleasure: And let us all,

2. Take care to approve the sincerity of such solemn acts, by walking *before him in holiness and righteousness.*

As the God to whom we profess to devote ourselves, *is holy, let us be holy in all manner of conversation* †; separating ourselves from every *pollution both of the flesh and of the spirit* ‡, and religiously observing righteousness in all its branches; giving in the first place to the blessed God his due, and esteeming it an indispensable duty to abound in all the offices of justice and charity to our fellow-creatures. Thus let us behave ourselves, as before *Him;* remembering that we are continually in the venerable presence of that glorious being, from whom no artifice can conceal our actions, to whom no specious pretences can disguise them; *who sees our ways, and counts all our steps* §.

* 1 Pet. ii. 9. As the word λαὸς περιούσιον is used in the text, it evidently directs our thoughts to these views. † 1 Pet. i. 15. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1. § Job xxxi. 4.

This will give a firmness and a consistency to our conduct, which it could not otherwise have; and will farther dispose us, as we are required in the text,

3. To pursue this course with a holy cheerfulness and alacrity of spirit; to serve him *without fear.*

The filial *fear of God* is so essential a part of true religion, that it is often put for the whole of it; and the *angel* which John saw, *flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth,* demanded it aloud*. But there is a certain anxiety and servitude of spirit, which is beneath the genius of christianity; a gloomy and ungenerous conception of the Deity, which is a kind of heavy chain upon the mind; which makes all its operations unwieldy, and painful. This the gentle encouraging constitution of the gospel was intended to cure, by inspiring us with sentiments of gratitude, hope and love. *Fear hath torment;* and therefore that *perfection of love,* to which so gracious a dispensation was intended to bring us, *casteth it out* †. *For we have not received the spirit of bondage, but of adoption;* and full of filial affection and confidence, under the influences of that spirit, *we cry abba, Father* ‡. Having *laid hold on the covenant* of grace and peace in Christ, having secured our everlasting concerns by committing our souls into his faithful hand, and listing under him as the great *Captain of our Salvation,* we ought not to be terrified, as if we every moment apprehended some fatal event; but should march on with cheerful courage, as those that expect to be *More than conquerors* §. *The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear*‖. Renewed deliverance should encourage our hope and confidence in Him, and should forbid that anxiety of spirit, which seasons of public alarm are too ready to occasion. Let this therefore be our character and temper: And to conclude the exhortation,

4. Let us constantly persevere in it, and carry it through *all the days of our life.*

It was the unhappy character of Israel, that though under the first impressions of his merciful appearances for them *they sang God's praise, they soon forgat his works* ¶. But we ought

* Rev. xiv. 6, 7. † 1 John iv. 18. ‡ Rom. viii. 15.
§ Rom. viii. 37. ‖ Ps. xxvii. 1, 3. ¶ Ps. cvi. 12, 13.

to remember, that though this particular interposition and act of divine providence be a transient thing, the effects of it are solid and permanent. If (which I hope will be the case,) we enjoy future tranquility and liberty; if our religious rights continue unmolested, even to the end of our lives; and our posterity rise up to the same blessings after us; we are to ascribe it to this defeat of the common enemy. It ought therefore to be our care, to carry the substantial proofs of our gratitude through every remaining day of life; and, as far as in us lies, to transmit the impression to them that come after us; as it is the divine pleasure, that *One generation should praise his works to another, and should declare his mighty acts* *. And indeed, if the gracious hand of God in our deliverance be forgot; if men either attempt no reformation at all, or soon return to their former indolence and wickedness; I fear, our case will be like that of the wicked dæmoniac in the parable, to whom the *evil spirit*, which had left him for a while, *returned, with seven* confederate *spirits worse than himself*, who rendered *his last state* more miserable *than the former* †.

But this naturally leads me to mention some considerations, by which I shall farther inforce the exhortation I have been addressing to you. And you will easily perceive, that they are very obvious; and the importance of them is equally apparent. —We shall otherwise make a most ungrateful return to God;— we shall be condemned even by the tenor of our own prayers;— we may reasonably expect, that God should renew his chastisements with greater severity;—or we may be assured, that to have alienated ourselves from his service after such a deliverance, will be matter of dreadful account at last to every particular person, however God may be pleased to deal with us as a nation.

(1.) Let your own consciences judge, whether it were not a most ungrateful return to the blessed God for all the benefits we have received from him, to neglect the temper and conduct to which we have been exhorted.

What can we imagine he intended by this train of providences; by the alarm and the rescue? Was it not to awaken us? Was it not to engage us to *serve him?*——What other end could his wisdom and goodness propose in it? Or what so worthy end can we ascribe to him?——And shall we, so far as in us lies, frustrate this gracious design of providence;

* Ps. cxlv. 4. † Mat. xii. 43,—

a design, which indeed so greatly inhances the value of the mercy itself? Shall we *go on in our sins*, and act as if we really imagined, that we were *Delivered*, on purpose to repeat and aggravate *our abominations* *? Surely we should think of it with detestation. According to that just and lively reasoning of the pious Ezra †, *After thou hast given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments?* God forbid.—Were this to be our conduct,

2. We should be condemned by the tenor of our own prayers.

Let me on this occasion seriously remind you, of our late solemn assemblies, in public, and in private; of the repeated and earnest supplications, which we have made it our professed business to pour out in the divine presence. And what was then the language of our lips, and of our hearts? Could we have presumed to say, "Lord, deliver us, that we may go on to offend thee! And lengthen out our tranquility, that our minds may be as vain, our passions as irregular, and our lives as unprofitable as before!" No, far from this, it was our prayer, that God would by all this reform us! That he would reform us as a nation! And what vile hypocrisy, what profane contempt of the divine Being were it, to pretend to desire reformation as a nation, while we are unwilling to bear our part in it; nay, while we are throwing in the weight of our example, be it more or less, into the opposite scale! Alas, Sirs, you may forget your prayers, as soon as you have ended them; you may disregard the purport of them, even while you pretend by your bodily posture and appearance to be offering them to God: But they are all set down in the *book of his remembrance;* and his eye, which can never be eluded or imposed upon, discerns the consistency or inconsistency of your actions, when compared with them. If therefore these reasonable and grateful returns be not made, it follows by a natural connection with the former consideration,

3. We may justly apprehend, that God will renew his chastisements with greater severity.

Such is the tenor of that dreadful scripture, *If ye will not be reformed by me by these things*, saith the Lord, that is, by the calamities which had been spoken of before, *but will* still *walk contrary to me; Then will I also walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times more for your sins* ‡. And

* Jer. vii. 10. † Ezra ix. 13, 14. ‡ Lev. xxvi. 23, 24.

let us not imagine this impossible. Let us not act, as if we thought, what it is certain none of us can think, that God hath no weapon but the sword, by which he can chastise us. Those arrows of his righteous displeasure which he is discharging against our cattle, such as in some instances have been a forerunner to the most terrible of all temporal judgments, a pestilence among men, may sensibly teach us the contrary.—Nor can we imagine, that if he chose to make the sword the instrument of his justice, he has no other hands to wield it, than those from which it now seems to be falling. Nay, even these falling hands can he strengthen. His almighty breath can in a moment blow up the dying embers into a flame, which shall spread from our cities to our villages, and consume our houses, our palaces, and our churches.—It is very observable, that when Jerusalem was just going to be destroyed, first by the Chaldeans, and several ages afterwards by the Romans, that a few months before the fatal blow came, the hostile armies which were encamped against the city, on a sudden rased the siege, and removed to some distance; which afforded a short triumph to the wretched inhabitants *. But alas, soon did they return with redoubled terror, and execute the divine judgments upon them, with a severity hardly to be equalled in the history of any other country. Let Britain hear and tremble; lest after having shared with Jerusalem in the rich blessings it received and abused, we also share with it in a proportionable vengeance. But whether that vengeance fall upon us as a kingdom, or not,

(4.) We may be assured, that to have alienated ourselves from the service of God, after having received such and so many deliverances, will be to each particular person matter of dreadful account before the tribunal of God at last.

Remember it, Sirs, the day is near; that awful important day, that will call you to the divine bar: And are not many of you every hour liable to be called thither, with the guilt of all your sins upon your heads? Alas, how many have passed into eternity since this rebellion broke out, even of those who have not been exposed to the ravages of war, and the terrors of the sword! How many, that but a few weeks ago were as inquisitive after news, and as impatient to hear the event as we, have been suddenly cut off in the midst of all the tumult and agitation of their various passions; and found perhaps, that, important as the affair was about the issue of which they were so solicitous,

* See Jer. xxxvii. 5,——10. and Joseph. Bell. Jud. Lib. ii. cap. 19. [al. 24.]§. 6, 7.

there was another of infinitely greater moment to them, which they neglected; and neglected to their eternal ruin!

We all know, that we must shortly be among the dead. And surely when we have that solemn interview with our Judge, he will remember through what a scene we have passed; and will distinctly attend to every circumstance, in his conduct towards us. And how justly may he expostulate with us, at least by the voice of our own conscience, in some such language as this? "What could I have done more for you, than I did? What methods did I not try upon you? By my kind providence you were born in a land, for its civil and religious privileges the glory of all lands. You grew up from your infancy in a profound peace, and only heard by a distant report of the calamities, with which other nations were exercised. On you I tried gentler methods, *Sending to you all my servants, rising up early and sending them*, with messages of the most evident importance; *but ye would not hear**. You still continued *Settled on your lees*†: And therefore, after long forbearance, I for a little while changed the dealings of my providence. I shook my rod over you: I permitted an enemy to invade you, and evil to rise up against you at home: And after long insensibility, you saw your danger extreme. But while it was pressing, you were too busy to mind religion. It was judged employment enough, to prepare for your security against the violence of man; whereas my displeasure was not apprehended, nor any serious measures taken to provide against it. I bore all this; and by a sudden turn in my providence I delivered, and established you again: And you did indeed take some notice of it. You enquired into the circumstance; you talked of it for a while, as a remarkable story: But it proved a mere amusement. Your hearts were not struck; you *Returned not unto me: No man repented of his wickedness*, so as seriously to say, *what have I done*‡? Therefore were you justly given up as incorrigible. I had reason to say, *Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more* §. Wonder not therefore, that you are now given up to destruction, after having been thus solicited and alarmed, thus rescued and intreated again, in vain."

May divine grace preserve you from that dreadful sentence, which must succeed to such a remonstrance! May it inspire us all with better sentiments; that we may not only learn, what these insufferable disorders must, I think, teach the most stupid,

* Jer. vii. 25, 26. † Zeph. i. 12. ‡ Jer. viii. 6. § Isa. i. 5.

to be sensible of the blessings we enjoy under his majesty's happy administration, and most loyally to exert ourselves to the utmost in its defence: But may we also learn, to submit ourselves most constantly to the government of God! May we all be engaged to *Search our ways and our hearts* *, that we may correct every thing that is amiss, and may act more worthy the signal blessings we continue to enjoy, and the gracious providence by which we are re-established in them!

I shall conclude, with one more general reflection and inference; which will ever be seasonable, and which most directly suits the text in its primary design, as uttered at the birth of John the forerunner of our Lord.

How incomparably great are our obligations to God, for that deliverance which he hath granted us by his Son; and how great will our guilt and condemnation be, if we do not improve it aright!

The utmost rage of human enemies can only *Kill the body* †; but those spiritual enemies from whom Christ delivers us, are aiming at the everlasting *destruction of the soul.* By him God hath condescended to give us the most complete rule, and the most amiable example, of a pious, holy, and righteous life; inforced by every motive that can strike the most active of our passions. The stupid disregard of it which so generally prevails, is, next to the mad opposition which *men of corrupt minds* are making to it, the basest and most provoking ingratitude to the divine Being. And the just displeasure of God against it will be irresistibly demonstrated, when he, whom men will not now receive as a *deliverer*, shall be *Revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not his gospel* ‡.

But I hope, many of us have been engaged by divine grace to comply with its design, and have the testimony of our consciences that we are *walking before God in holiness and righteousness.* Let such of us be animated to go on cheerfully in our way. Let *Our souls magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour* §, persisting in his service, till we arrive at that world, where our disposition to it, and our happiness in it, shall meet with no interruption or allay; even at those peaceful and blissful regions, where no name of an enemy shall be heard but in songs of triumph; and where the utter *destruction* of *the last of enemies*, shall furnish out matter for those songs.

* Lam. iii. 40. † Mat. x. 28. ‡ 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. § Luke i. 46, 47.

# POSTSCRIPT.

I add the Hymn which was sung after Sermon, as what may naturally and plainly express those devout sentiments, which will, I hope, rise in the mind of every attentive reader.

I.

SALVATION does to God belong,
His power and grace shall be our song:
His hand hath dealt a secret blow,
And terror strikes the haughty foe,

II.

The Lord's avenging sword is nigh;
In uproar wild their legions fly:
And stores, so late their boast and joy,
Their own despairing hands destroy.

III.

Praise to the Lord, who bows his ear,
Propitious to his people's prayer;
And, tho' deliverance long delay,
Answers in his well-chosen day.

IV.

Oh may thy grace our land engage,
Rescued from fierce barbarian rage,
The tribute of its love to bring
To thee, our Saviour and our King!

V.

Our temples guarded from the flame,
Shall echo thy triumphant name;
And every peaceful private home
To thee a temple shall become.

VI.

Still be it our supreme delight,
To walk as in thine honour'd sight;
Still in thy precepts, and thy fear,
To life's last hour to persevere!

# SERMON I.

## THE TEMPER AND CONDUCT

OF THE

## PRIMITIVE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL,

*Illustrated and recommended, in a Sermon preached at Wisbeach, June 8, 1737, at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. William Johnston.*

2 Cor. iv. 5.—*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake.*

THE apostle observes, that what had *Happened to him* with regard to his imprisonment at Rome, though it seemed to bear so melancholy an aspect, yet did on the whole fall out by the special providence of God for *the furtherance of the gospel* *; and we may justly apply the same reflection to several other very afflictive circumstances of his life, and particularly to the most perverse and unjust opposition which he met with from those factious teachers, especially of the circumcision, who gave so much disturbance to him and the churches. The attack which they made upon his character and interest at Corinth, laid him under a necessity of saying many things which he would have gladly omitted, and of mentioning some circumstances in his history, which had otherwise perhaps remained unknown, at least could never have appeared with equal evidence and spirit. While he is engaged in his own vindication, and entering into the particulars of his character and conduct, he drops many very edifying expressions, which are worthy the most attentive regard both of ministers and private christians; of which the words I have now been reading are none of the least considerable. He was obliged to say something which might look like an encomium on himself, and therefore chuses to speak in the name of all his faithful brethren

* Phil. i. 22.

in the ministry, as well as his own. Now after he had declared that they had *Renounced the hidden things of dishonesty*, which were the great mysteries of the heathen priesthood, and probably the secret spring which actuated these judaizing teachers, *Not* like them *walking in craftiness, not handling the word of God deceitfully*, or adulterating it with any foreign and corrupt mixtures; but acting so constantly in the sight of God, as to secure to themselves a secret testimony in the consciences of all that intimately knew them, and accurately observed them; he adds, *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake* *. Oh that every christian minister, who in succeeding ages hath read these words, had been delivered into the mould of them! Oh that we whom God hath honoured with this high and holy calling, may make it our increasing care to form ourselves by them; and *Beholding as in a glass* the beautiful model, *may be changed into the same image from glory to glory.*

It will be my business in the process on my discourse from these words,

I. To illustrate the account which the apostle here gives of his own conduct, and that of his brethren in the christian ministry.

II. To consider the principles on which we may reasonably conclude they acted, and by which they were influenced to it.

III. I shall close with some reflections on the whole.

I chuse to throw my discourse into such a form, as it will give me an opportunity of suggesting my advice and exhortations to you, my dear and reverend brother, who are this day giving yourself up to this excellent work, in the most humble and respectful manner; which I am now the more solicitous to do, lest I should seem to dictate to those from whom I shall always be ready, with great pleasure and deference, to receive instructions.

I. I am to consider the account which the apostle gives of his own conduct, and that of his brethren in the christian ministry: *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake.* In which words he plainly declares—that they did not make themselves the chief end of their ministry, but faithfully devoted it to the service of Christ as the great Lord, whom they endeavoured to serve by all the most humble and affectionate condescensions to those that were committed to their ministerial care.

* It seems evident to me, that ver. 3 and 4, come in as a parenthesis.

1. The apostles did not make themselves the chief end of their ministry.

*We*, says St. Paul, *preach not ourselves*. It is to be feared that some did so even in those early days, for the anti-christian spirit began to work betimes; so that it gave Paul reason to say, that they served not Christ Jesus, but their own belly, while they preached him out *Of contention rather than love, supposing to add affliction to his bonds* *; insomuch that he complains of it as a general, though, blessed be God, not an universal character, *All seeking their own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ's* †. But this was far from being the character of the apostle, or any faithful disciple of Christ; who must have learnt, in some measure, that essential branch of the christian character, to *Deny himself, and taking up* even *his cross to follow* his master to crucifixion itself, should he lead him on in that painful and dangerous way ‡.

It may be worth our while more particularly to observe, that these good men did not seek their own applause, their own interest, or their own power and authority, as the chief end of undertaking and prosecuting the ministry; for each of these particulars must be included in this general expression, *we preach not ourselves*, and it will be our wisdom to regard each.

These primitive ministers did not, in preaching the gospel, aim at their own applause and reputation.

The greatest men amongst the heathens did it, and avowed it; they reckoned the love of fame amongst the noblest of passions, and the pursuit of it appeared a mark of the most generous mind. But christian apostles had higher views. They considered themselves as in the presence of God, and had the truly great ambition of being *Accepted of him* §, and then human applause and admiration disappeared as less than nothing. It is, says good St. Paul, *A very small thing to me*, the smallest matter one can imagine, *to be judged of man's judgment, for he that judgeth me is the Lord* ‖. On this principle we find, that when he came to Corinth, though it were so learned and polite a city, he did not affect to *Come with the excellency* or loftiness *of speech, and the persuasive words of* man's *wisdom* ¶; he did not labour for the exactest forms of expression, nor study to compose and deliver his discourses in such a manner as might

* Phil. i. 16. † Phil. ii. 21. ‡ Mat. xvi. 24.
§ 2 Cor. v. 9. ‖ Ελαχιστον, 1 Cor. iv. 3. ¶ 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4.

most easily have gained him the reputation of an exact orator, so that people should point after him as he passed through the streets, and say, That is Paul! a little circumstance with which poor Demosthenes was so highly delighted; but he contented himself with preaching the plain things of the gospel, in a plain and serious, a rational and unaffected manner, whether men would hear, or whether they would forbear. And indeed, he was rather on his guard against too pompous and florid a style, lest it should seem that a man who was so studious to adorn the doctrines of the gospel, did not thoroughly believe them; and so the *Cross of Christ should have become of none effect**, when an apostle seemed so little penetrated with the argument drawn from it, as to be at leisure for trifles.

Such a turn of mind we may easily perceive in his epistles. They appear to be written out of the fulness of his soul, but without any anxiety about the style, or any very exact care even to range the ideas according to the most methodical order; abounding every where with a great many lively and beautiful digressions, that often run into each other in a manner which the strictest rules of polite writing will hardly allow. In a word, we eminently see in St. Paul, perhaps beyond any other writer in the world, *A good man bringing out of the good treasure of his heart good things*†, with a kind of magnificent negligence. His works are like a wilderness of beautiful and fragrant plants, springing up promiscuously out of a happy soil; and amidst all their seeming confusion, producing, to a natural taste, a finer effect than if they were drawn out with a solicitous care, set in the most regular figures, and cut into a thousand artificial forms.

Again, the apostles, and their fellow-labourers in the gospel ministry, were not governed by a view to the possessions of the present life.

These holy men abhorred the very thought of making the church of Christ a kind of porch to the temple of Mammon. The circumstances in which they undertook their work, were such as could leave no room to suspect that they sought it only as a gainful trade. On the contrary, at their very first setting out in it, they *left all*, that they might follow their master. And though it may be objected with regard to some of them, that their all was little, yet they had at least food and raiment, and a habitation which they could call their own; whereas, when they devoted themselves to the ministry of the gospel, one of

* 1 Cor. i. 17. † Mat. xii. 35.

them could say in the name of the rest, *Even to this day we are hungry and naked, and have no certain dwelling-place* *. And this was St. Paul, who seems to have resigned very great prospects, which his liberal education, his remarkable proficiency and zeal in the Jewish religion, and the degree of favour which he had even in his younger days with the greatest men of his nation, might fairly have given him. But *Those things, which were* before *gain to him, he counted loss for Christ* †: and when he had once devoted himself to his service, his actions as well as his words plainly shewed, that he was *crucified to the world*, by the cross of his Redeemer. He could therefore appeal to the Corinthians, that his conduct had proved he sought not *Theirs but them* ‡; and when writing to the Thessalonians, could make an appeal to God himself, that he had never used a *Cloak of covetousness* ‖. Nay, when leaving the Ephesians, amongst whom he had made so long an abode, that his real temper must have been discovered, he could assure them, and they themselves could testify the truth of it, that he had been so far from *Coveting any man's silver, or gold, or apparel, that his own hand had ministered to his necessities* §; and that, in order to prevent his being burdensome to them, even for the necessaries of life, he had sometimes added the labour of the night to that of the day.

Nor did these holy men arrogate to themselves any secular power, or pretend to any authority over the civil liberties of mankind.

Grotius supposes this to be the direct and principal meaning of the text; *we preach not ourselves as Lords, but proclaim Christ Jesus* alone under that character. And this undoubtedly is included in the phrase, though I can see no imaginable reason for such a limitation as he would lay upon it. These primitive pastors of the church, according to that excellent advice of St. Peter, so peculiarly forgotten by those who have contended for the honour of being his only successors, did *Not behave as Lords over God's heritage* ¶; and though they insisted upon it, that what they wrote by a divine revelation and direction, should be received as *The commandment of Christ* **; yet Paul himself expressly renounces all claim to a dominion over men's faith: thereby confessing himself not to be the master of the family,

* 1 Cor. iv. 11. † Phil. iii. 7. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 14. ‖ 1 Thess. ii. 5. § Acts xx. 33, 34.

¶ 1 Pet. v. 3. Dr. Latham's elegant and judicious Discourse on this clause of my text, at the ordination of Messrs. Gregory and Dodge, will abundantly supply the deficiency of these brief remarks of mine upon it; and thither I do with great pleasure refer the reader. ** 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

but merely a servant in it, who desired to be regarded by them no farther than he could prove that he spake in a greater name than his own. *Let a man*, says he, *so esteem of us as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God*, of whom the great thing required is, that we *be found faithful* to him whose commission we bear. Nor did they ever pretend that this extraordinary character of messengers from heaven gave them any claim to secular power on earth; they assumed no authority in temporals in order to spirituals; and they were not penetrating enough to understand the doctrine of the *Two swords* *, with which many have since been so fond of meddling, I fear to their own wounding, as well as to the dishonour of the christian name, and the destruction of many of their fellow-creatures. *The weapons of* the apostle's *warfare were not carnal, but spiritual*, as it was necessary they should be, in order to the *bringing every thought into subjection to the law of Christ* †. Which leads me to pass on from this negative part of their character, to observe, that as they did not preach themselves, so as to make their own reputation, or interest, or dominion the end of their labours; so,

2. They faithfully devoted their ministry to the service of Christ.

*We preach Christ Jesus the Lord;* which plainly intimates, that they made Christ the great object of their preaching, and that they endeavoured to speak of him in such a manner, as to promote his empire over the hearts and consciences of men.

They made Christ the great subject of their preaching.

So they declare, *We preach Christ crucified, though to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness* ‡. At Corinth in particular, curious as it was, the apostle declares, *I determined to know*, i. e. to make known, and insist upon *nothing among you save Jesus Christ, even that crucified person* §; with whatever scorn and contempt such a subject might be treated. And therefore it is observable, that *preaching Christ* is sometimes used as a comprehensive expression for all that the apostles taught. Not that Paul or his brethren neglected the great doctrines of natural religion, which are so evidently the foundation of the gospel itself, that it is perfect madness to pour contempt upon them. We might in reason conclude, as we find it to have been fact, that when they came amongst gentile and idolatrous nations, they began with asserting the being and

* Luke xxii. 38. † 2 Cor. x. 4. 5. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 23.
§ 1 Cor. ii. 2. Και τουτον εσταυρωμενον.

attributes of the only true God, the universality of his providence, and that certainty of a state of future retribution, which is so naturally connected with it. All this they taught; but they did not stop here, for they well knew that it was their duty to make these things the plan on which to raise that glorious superstructure which christianity hath built upon them. They served God with their spirit in the gospel of his Son, and therefore proclaimed the glory of the Father, as reflected from the face of Christ Jesus the Lord.

They established the truth of his deity, the mystery of his incarnation, the necessity of his atonement, the perfection of his righteousness, the riches of his grace. They described him as living on earth an example of universal goodness, as dying on the cross a sacrifice for sin, as rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven, and as reigning there the Lord of universal nature, and *Head over all to the church* *. You cannot but know, that these are the darling topics on which they most copiously insist in their sermons and writings which are transmitted to us: and if St. Paul at Athens † seems to touch more sparingly than usual on these important doctrines, it is to be considered, that we have only the beginning of a discourse, in which the rudeness of the philosophers interrupted him, before he could proceed to open and establish those doctrines which were peculiar to his character as an ambassador of Jesus. And I am persuaded, that whoever impartially peruses the epistles of that great apostle, and observes not only his direct arguments, but his lively and pathetic digressions on this glorious subject when it comes in his way, will not only see that Paul was delighted with it, but will himself be disposed to wish that every christian minister may copy after this great original. Especially when it is considered,

That he and his brethren preached Christ in such a manner as might most effectually establish his empire over the hearts and consciences of men.

*We preach Christ Jesus the Lord*, i. e. We preach him under the character of the great Lord, the ruler and governor of his church. They very well knew, that the design of christianity was not merely to amuse the world, but to reform it: and that its sublimest speculations were received and admitted in vain, if the life were not regulated, and the heart subdued by the gospel. Therefore do they on all occasions inculcate it, that *God had exalted Christ to be a prince as well as a Saviour* ‡;

* Eph. i. 22. † Acts. xvii. 22—31. ‡ Acts v. 31.

had ordained, and even sworn in his holiness, that *Every knee should bow unto him* *. These good men did not think it enough to declare the grace of the gospel, and then leave it to the Spirit of God, by his own immediate agency, to draw the proper consequences relating to duty; but they expressly draw those consequences themselves, and enter into a very large and particular detail of those duties. They insist upon it with great spirit and earnestness, as a *Faithful saying, that those who have believed in God, should be careful to maintain good works, and direct* succeeding ministers to *affirm it constantly* †. They declared, that it was the very purpose for which the *Saving grace of God had appeared unto all men, to teach them to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly* ‡. They urge christians, therefore to *Yield themselves to God as alive from the dead, and to employ their members as instruments of righteousness* §. *Beseeching them by the mercies of God to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which was indeed their most reasonable service* ‖. Nor did they think it beneath the honour of the evangelical ministry, sometimes to insist on arguments taken from the terrors of the law. *Knowing* those *terrors*, they laboured to *persuade men* by them; they affectionately warned them, that *The ground*, which under divine cultivation, *brought forth* nothing but *briars and thorns, was nigh unto cursing*, and *its end was to be burned* ¶; that to those who did not *Obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, there remained a certain fearful expectation of wrath, and fiery indignation, which should devour them*, yea, that they should be *punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power* **. This was the apostolic method of preaching Christ, so *Warning every man, and teaching every man, as that they might*, through the divine blessing, most probably hope to *present every man perfect in Christ;* that having their *fruit unto holiness, their end might be everlasting life* ††.

You see I have generally expressed these things in scripture language, that the illustration and proof might advance together. And if we desire to approve ourselves faithful in the same cause, we must conduct our ministration thus, and must also imitate these good men in the third particular of their conduct, which alone now remains to be considered from these words: which is,

* Rom. xiv. 11. † Tit. iii. 8. ‡ Tit. ii. 11, 12. § Rom. vi. 13. ‖ Rom. xii. 1.
¶ Heb. vi. 8. ** 2Thess. i. 8, 9. Heb. x. 27. †† Col. i. 28. Rom. vi. 22.

3. That they endeavoured to serve their great master, by the most humble and affectionate condescension to those that were committed to their care.

So far were they from lording it over their brethren, that according to the example and command of Christ himself, they owned themselves the servants of all: nor was it merely an empty compliment, for their actions spoke it as well as their words; they exercised great humility and condescension towards all, and they did it for Jesus sake.

They exercised great humility and condescension towards all their brethren, not excepting even the meanest of them.

To this Paul frequently exhorts others: *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate* *. *In love serve and be subject to one another, and let each esteem others better than himself.* Thus he advised, and thus he acted, and his brethren, no doubt, behaved like him. They well knew their *calling* as christians, and plainly saw, that *Not many mighty, not many noble, were called*, but that *God had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty;* that he had *Chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom* of eternal glory †. And if God would stoop thus low, they were cordially willing to do it. They could discern a dignity in a child of God, and an heir of glory, which shone through all their poverty and meanness in their dress, and outward appearance; inconsiderable circumstances, which could not prevent these holy men from *Honouring them that feared the Lord* ‡, though they might want some of those decorations which the vilest of mankind may wear, and perhaps to their greater infamy.

St. Paul was a memorable instance of this amiable temper; though by his education fit for higher company, and from his early years accustomed to it, he did not disdain the meanest of the people, and was not only easy of access to them, but visited them at their own dwellings, and carried his instructions and consolations *from house to house*, even to those where he could expect no entertainment, but such as arose from religious converse, society in worship, and a consciousness of being useful to the souls of men. And it is worthy of our notice, that in subserviency to this great design, this holy man was a very affectionate friend to their temporal interests; and that to such a degree, as to be far from imagining that he had done his part, when he had exhorted his hearers to contribute liberally to the

* Rom. xii. 16. † 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. James ii. 5. ‡ Psal. xv. 4.

supply of their indigent brethren. Most instructive in this view, is the address he makes to the presbyters or bishops of the church of Ephesus; in which, appealing to them, that *They themselves knew that his own hands had ministered to his necessities, and those that were with him;* he adds, *I have shewed you that, so labouring, you ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive* *.

The same true greatness of soul which engaged him cheerfully to contribute out of his small stock, for the relief of those that were yet more necessitous than himself, disposed him with great condescension and tenderness to bear the infirmities of his people, and in many instances to sacrifice his own taste and humour to theirs. *Who was weak, and he was not weak? Who was offended, and he did not burn* † with desire to remove the offence? When his converts behaved with too much of the peevishness and perverseness of children, he did not haughtily chastise them; but rather chose tenderly to expostulate with them, and if possible to love them out of their follies. He put on not only the bowels of a father, but the indulgence of a nurse towards them; *We were*, says he, *gentle amongst you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children, and ready to have imparted to you, not only the gospel of Christ, but our own souls* or lives also, i. e. to have died, as we lived, for your service, *because you were* singularly *dear to us* ‡.

This was the governing temper of St. Paul, and it carried him through some circumstances which required great and resolute self-denial; *He became all things to all men, if by any means he might gain some* sincere converts to the gospel. And in particular, *to the Jews he became as a Jew, that he might gain them*, i. e. he voluntarily laid himself under all the restraints of the Mosaic law, though he knew it was now abolished, that he might as a christian apostle convert the Jews. And this he carries so far, as to declare his readiness, not only to forbear those kinds of food which the law of Moses pronounceth unclean, but to give up all animal diet, and subsist entirely on vegetables, rather than he would grieve and offend his brethren, i. e. the feeblest christian. *If meat*, says he, *make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.* Thus, though the apostles were *free from all, they* nevertheless voluntarily became the *Servants of all* §, and indeed condescended to do, and forbear many things, because disagreeable to their christian

* Acts xx. 34, 35. † 2 Cor. xi. 29. ‡ 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8. § 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20.

brethren, which few hired servants would have done or forborne out of regard to those who were properly their masters. But let us not fail to remember, that

They did all this for the sake of Christ and his gospel.

*Ourselves your servants for Jesus sake.* It is certain, that such condescensions as we have been describing, are either great or mean, according to the principle from whence they proceed. Ambition can creep, that it may soar; and soothe, that it may afterwards insult: but the apostles stooped, that they might raise others; and pleased, that they might profit. We, says St. Paul, please all men to their good for their edification. This was their great concern, that *Whether they eat or drank, or whatever they did, they might do all to the glory of God* *. This was their *Earnest expectation and their hope, that in all things Christ might be glorified in them, whether by their life or their death* †. They sacrificed not only their humour and their ease, but life itself, to the great purposes of pleasing and serving the blessed Jesus; and Paul spake the sentiments of them all, when he said, *Neither bonds nor imprisonments move me; nor do I count my life dear unto me, that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord* ‡. But while I insist on such expressions as these, I do in part anticipate what I am to offer under the second head. Where I proposed,

II. To consider what were the principles by which they were animated to so noble a temper and conduct.

I the rather enter into the survey of them, as we shall find they were not only suited to the age and circumstances of the apostles, but ought also to have a very great influence upon us, whom God has favoured so far as to count us faithful, putting us into something of the same ministry with them, which can never be comfortably and honourably fulfilled, but by those who govern themselves by the like maxims and principles. They were undoubtedly influenced by an affectionate love to the blessed Redeemer, a pious zeal for the glory of God in the salvation of souls, and a prudent regard to their own present and future happiness. And if these great motives have their due weight with us, we shall not preach ourselvess but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves the servants of his people for his sake.

1. The apostles were engaged to the conduct we have described, by a most grateful affection to the blessed Redeemer.

* 1 Cor. x. 31. † Phil. i. 20. ‡ Acts xx. 24.

That dear name is precious to every believing soul, and how precious it was to these holy men, almost every page of their writings will declare. Divine grace had deeply humbled them under the conviction of their own guilt and weakness, and then taught them to view the Lord Jesus Christ as *Made of God unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption* *. They knew the grace of the Son of God in descending, and living, and dying for their salvation; and in passing through all the most dreadful scenes of suffering which imagination can suggest, with a love to them, which all those *waters could not quench, nor the floods drown.* And believing this, they could not but speak in his cause, they could not but desire to spend and be spent in his service. On this principle therefore doth Paul vindicate those ardours of zeal, which a profane world censured as enthusiasm and madness. *If we are besides ourselves, it is to God, for the love of Christ constraineth us while we thus judge,* and approve the argument in the coolest moments of reflection, *that if one died for all, then were all dead;* for had they not been in a state of condemnation and death, they would not have needed such a ransom. *And he died, that we, who live* only in consequence of his dying love, *should not henceforth live to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again* †. And we may assure ourselves, that while their souls were thus drawn with the *Cords of a man, and the bands of love* ‡, they saw a peculiar beauty in the condescensions of so great a personage and so dear a friend, which inclined them with pleasure to trace his steps, in making themselves the servants of others for his sake, who took upon him *The form of a servant* §, though he were *Lord of all.*

And ought not these considerations, my brethren, to have a constraining force upon us? Was it for the sake of the apostles alone, that the blessed Jesus stooped so low, and bore so much? Did he not *Love us, and give himself for us* ‖, and was not the news of our salvation contained in those glad tidings which he brought from heaven, which he proclaimed on earth, publishing them with long continued labour, and at length sealing them with his blood? Have not we our lot amongst his people; nay, I will add, are we not distinguished from most of the rest of them, by his favour, in that he hath committed to our trust his glorious gospel, the important cause that lay so near his heart, the great end of his toils and his sufferings? And where is our gratitude, where is our fidelity, where is our common integrity,

* 1 Cor. i. 30. † 2 Cor. v. 13, 14. ‡ Hos. xi. 4. § Phil. ii. 7. ‖ Gal. ii. 20.

if we can forget such engagements, and lose our concern for that gospel, in a mean solicitude about our own applause, or interest, or dominion? I trust, my brethren, it will never so be lost. I am persuaded, through divine grace, there are those amongst us, whose bosoms glow with such undissembled love, that we can truly say, we reckon the title of servants of Christ, and of the church for his sake, a thousand times more honourable than to be called, and to be, the lords of the whole world; that we had rather approve ourselves the faithful interpreters of his laws, than see assembled nations bowing down before us, and with the profoundest submission receiving law at our mouths.

2. The apostles were animated to the conduct we have been reviewing, by a pious zeal, for the glory of God in the salvation of souls.

They well knew, that the grace of the Father was the original source of all the blessings they received by the interposition of the Son, and their hearts were so subjected and united to God, that they could not fail of being tenderly concerned, that being *Bought with* such *a price*, and maintained by such a constant emanation of divine favour and bounty, they might *glorify* God *with their bodies, and their spirits*, which they owned to be *the Lord's* *, by so many important claims.

And they must farther infer from the complete all-sufficiency of the divine Being, that the only way whereby we are capable of glorifying him, is by promoting the display of his attributes; which are most nobly illustrated in the perfection and happiness of his rational creatures; especially their final and eternal happiness. It plainly appears from the whole strain of the apostles' writings, that those holy men were deeply penetrated with the views of an invisible world; and as it was their great concern for themselves, that their own souls *Might be given them for a prey* †; so sentiments of compassion and humanity joined with those of piety, to engage them to wish and labour for the salvation of others.

They certainly knew, however others might forget it, that every human creature hath in its breast an immortal soul, which must survive not only the dissolution of the body, but the wreck of this lower world; a soul that by its original constitution was capable of shining in the image of God, and the glories of paradise, when the *sun* should be *turned into darkness, and the moon into blood.* They were likewise sensible, that these precious souls were naturally in a very dangerous state, and by sin stood

* 1 Cor. vi. ult. † Jer. xlv. 5.

exposed to everlasting darkness, despair and ruin. And this appeared to them such a lamentable sight, that they could not but *Weep* over those whose *end* would so probably *be destruction* *. And when they saw them going on in a gay insensibility of danger, and a proud confidence, on the very borders of hell, it *cut them to the heart*, and put an eagerness and pathos into the manner of their address, which nothing but such an infinite concern could have given. They were attempting to *Recover those out of the snare of the devil, who were led captives by him at his pleasure* †; *To turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that*, instead of meeting all the terrors of his wrath, and sinking into eternal destruction, *they might receive the forgiveness of their sins, and an inheritance amongst his sanctified people* ‡. And while this was the view in which they regarded them, who can wonder, that they did as it were *Travail in birth for their conversion* §? Who can wonder if it appeared to them even an inhuman thing, to be more solicitous about soothing men's ears, or gaining an influence over men's temporal concerns, than saving their souls? As it would indeed be a more cruel kind of folly, than for a physician to be more careful that his bill were elegantly written, than that the life of his patient should be saved by the suitableness of the prescription.

I must farther add, in order to complete the argument, that the apostles well knew, that nothing was so likely to save the perishing souls of men, as the great doctrines of the everlasting gospel; nothing so like to recover them, when fainting and dying, as the vital savour of a Redeemer's name; which is indeed the *Power of God to the salvation of every one that believeth* ‖. This engaged them, in this manner, to *preach Christ Jesus the Lord;* and I hope, my brethren, we shall never imagine, that our wisdom can find out another more effectual way. I hope we shall never practise so dangerous a complaisance to the unbelievers of the present age, as to wave the gospel, that we may accommodate ourselves to their taste; which if we do, we may indeed preserve the name of virtue, but I fear we shall destroy the thing itself; lose it in our congregations, and probably in our hearts too. For, I confess, it seems to me much more probable, that the doctrines of natural religion alone should be blessed as the means of reforming heathens, who never heard of christianity, than that they should have much effect upon those who under the profession of it, slight its most glorious peculiari-

* Phil. iii. 19. † 2 Tim. ii. 26. ‡ Acts xxvi. 18. § Gal. iv. 19. ‖ Rom. i. 16.

ties; as if the revelation of Jesus were a mere incumbrance, which, while we own it to be true, we might nevertheless forget, without great danger, or much inconvenience. But if we imbibe the spirit of the apostles, and make their conduct the model of ours, we may cheerfully expect that presence of God with us, in consequence of which the great ends of our ministry may be answered, to the reformation of men's lives, and the salvation of their souls.

How glorious a hope! how rich a recompence for all the fatigue, for all the condescension, for all the self-denial which our office may require! Most forcibly doth St. James express the importance of the thought, if one man be the happy instrument of gaining another to the cause of truth and holiness, *Let him know*, let him pause upon it and reflect, *that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death**, an immortal soul! And how much is comprehended in those few words? We are sometimes perhaps ready to envy the opportunity which the great men of the world have to promote the happiness of others, and it is the most generous, and indeed the only rational view in which riches and power can be desired. But let us remember, my brethren, such is the nature of an immortal soul, that to bring it into the way to eternal life, is a greater good than any merely temporal blessing, which can be conferred upon the greatest number of men for the longest duration in the present world. And it is most certain, that the moment will at length come, when the sum of happiness which hath actually been enjoyed by every particular soul, that we have led into that blessed world, will be greater than what the most uninterrupted peace, liberty, and plenty could have given to the most numerous nations, in a hundred, or a thousand, or ten thousand years. Let so sublime a thought animate our pursuit, and make us willing to *Spend and be spent* in such a service†.

3. The apostles well knew, that by such a conduct as we have now been surveying, their own present and future happiness would be most effectually secured.

They seemed indeed to sacrifice their present interest, and in many important instances they did so; yet surely they found a rich equivalent in the consciousness of such a temper, and a prospect of that reward which would through grace attend it.

The pleasures of gratitude and humanity, are a thousand times superior to that which can arise from gratifying the senses,

* James v. 20. † 2 Cor. xii. 15.

or even from improvements in science. I hope all that hear me this day, know the delight of serving a friend whom we highly esteem and love; many of us, I question not, do particularly know how agreeable it is to find some opportunity of expressing our cordial sense of those favours, which it is impossible for us fully to repay. Let us judge by that, how delightful it must be to these good men, when their hearts were full of the most lively and penetrating sense of a Redeemer's love, to see themselves in such a situation, as that their whole lives should be spent in serving his interest, and every day of them should do something to promote it.

And the influence which their labours had upon the happiness of mankind, must also add a most delightful relish to them. Our nature is so constituted by the wise and gracious author of it, that some degree of pleasure inseparably attend every attempt for the real improvement of any part of his creation, even the meanest. It is pleasant to view a spot of ground, which from a barren and useless wild has been manured and cultivated, planted and adorned by human industry, so that it is reduced to a fruitful garden or field; and he who hath laboured to effect it, reviews it with double satisfaction. It is much more delightful to have been instrumental in forming and cultivating the mind, and reducing those who were once little better than savages to discipline and arts, to the improvements and elegances of life, whereby they may as it were be broken into men; but surely the apostles must with incomparably greater satisfaction look round about them, and see whole regions enlightened by the rays which they had diffused; thousands of their fellow-creatures recovered from darkness and ignorance, superstition and vice, and formed to wise, regular, noble sentiments, subjected to God, united to Christ, and conducted into the ways of peace and life by their means. Accordingly, I doubt not, but you have often observed in how sublime and pathetic a manner St. Paul expresseth himself on this occasion, in the name of his brethren as well as in his own, in the progress of this epistle. We *approve ourselves*, says he, the *ministers of God*, in all the various circumstances through which we pass, *in honour and dishonour*, treated indeed by the world, *as deceivers*, *yet* conscious to ourselves that we are *true*, and the great patrons of truth; *as* obscure and *unknown* to a proud and insolent world, who affect to overlook us with sovereign contempt, *yet well known* even by the happiest tokens to those blessed souls who are brought home to God by our means; *as dying* daily, yet *behold we live*, through the singular interposition of our great

Lord for our preservation; *as sorrowful* on account of various calamities that surround us, and *yet* in spirit *always rejoicing*, because though we appear in the world *as poor* in these things, *yet* we are *making rich* in grace and glory *. Blessed leaders in the army of Christ! Who would not emulate such a character and state? Who would not wish for your hardships and trials, might his supports and success be proportionable to yours? Such were the pleasures they found in preaching Christ Jesus the Lord; and undoubtedly their generous minds delighted to do it in the condescending manner we have described. To converse with their flock in such a free, easy, obliging way, as their brethren, as their servants for Jesus sake, on the foot of equal and respectful friendship, suited their taste and their temper much better than all the homage, and all the revenues, which secular power could have given, and secular terror could have extorted.

I only add in the conclusion of this head, that the apostles were influenced to such a conduct by a regard to their own eternal interest.

That great important concern which swallowed up all others in their mind, and with which nothing here seemed by any means worthy to be compared. Paul himself did not think it unfit to reflect, and to say, a *Necessity is laid upon me*, and *woe unto me if I preach not the gospel* †. He well knew, that if such vigilance was expected from a jewish prophet, that the souls who perished by his neglect should be by God *Required at his hand* ‡, the danger of such a neglect under the christian dispensation, would be yet greater in proportion to the clearer degree of evidence with which *Life and immortality* was *brought to light* §. He therefore, and his associates in this important work, made it their care, as himself expresseth it, *To watch for souls as those that must give an account*, and were exceedingly solicitous, that they might *do it with joy and not with grief* ‖. They looked on their converts as those who should be their *Crown and rejoicing in the day of the Lord* ¶; and their delightful companions in the glories of the heavenly world. And when, conscious that through the divine assistance they had fought the good fight, and finished their course, and kept their fidelity, they were humbly bold to look forward with cheerful expectation as well as desire, *To that crown of* life *which the Lord* had laid up for all his faithful servants, *that love his appearance* **.

* 2 Cor. vi. 8—10. † 1 Cor. ix. 16. ‡ Ezek. iii. 18. § 2 Tim. i. 10.
‖ Heb. xiii. 17. ¶ 1 Thess. ii. 19. ** 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Such may our hopes be, my fathers and brethren, and such our triumphs in the near views of death and eternity. Our days are passing away apace, and no secular powers or advantages can prolong them; nay, perhaps, were we in the number of the richest and greatest of those that call themselves the ministers of Christ, life might run out only so much the sooner, while on the one hand the baits of luxury, and on the other, the cries of the oppressed, might concur to shorten it. When this scene of vanity is closing, when we are to exchange every ornament for the dress of death, and all the amusements and cares of mortality, for the solemnities of the eternal state; in that awful hour, I say, it will be no grief of heart to us, that we have chosen in all humility to serve Christ and the souls of men, rather than to make our names great, and our families wealthy: And when we come to appear in the presence of that great Redeemer, who hath been witness to all our conduct, and all our designs, we shall really find that we have lost nothing by whatever we have sacrificed to his cause and interest. The applause of thousands is but an empty sound when compared with that of *Well done, good and faithful servant* *, and all the honours and possessions which the greatest princes could bestow, would be *lighter than vanity, when laid in the balance* with that unfading crown of glory, which every faithful minister may expect, when Christ the chief Shepherd shall appear †.

I have dilated so much on these pleasant and copious topics, that I have hardly left myself time,

III. So much as to mention the reflections which may naturally arise from what we have been hearing. You will easily apprehend they are such as these;

How greatly is the truth of christianity confirmed by the character of those who were first employed in the publication of it; who gave the greatest evidence that can possibly be imagined of their being entirely devoted to the sacred cause of truth and piety, and expressed, as we have heard, the most disinterested and self-denying zeal in the service of both.

How happy is it for the christian cause, that these original monuments are still preserved, and that we are not left to form an idea of its ministers merely from the general history of succeeding and distant ages, or by the canons and decrees of the greatest part of ecclesiastical councils; which are commonly drawn up with so different a spirit, that, were we to judge by them alone, charity would have inclined us to hope,

* Mat. xxv. 23. † 1 Pet. v. 4.

that those who called themselves the chief successors of the apostles, had never heard of the character of those holy men; but had rather formed their conduct, and even their maxims too, I will not say by the jewish, but by the heathen priesthood.

Nevertheless let us bless God, that in the midst of so general a depravation, there have been in all ages, and particularly in our own, a select remnant, who have not defiled their garments, nor prostituted their sacred character and office to those idols of jealousy, which have been so shamefully erected even in the house of the Lord. Persons, so far as I can judge, of all denominations, both of established and separate churches, at home and abroad, who have been, and are in their respective spheres, *burning and shining lights;* men of God, who however differing in opinion, in discipline, or in worship, have agreed to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, to bow their hearts and souls to the obedience of his laws, to value the souls committed to their care, serving them in humility and love, candidly excusing the frailties of their brethren, praying, that *Wherein they were otherwise minded,* than reason and scripture directed, that *God would* in his own time and way *reveal it unto them,* and in the mean time labouring, that *whereunto they had already attained, they might walk by the same rule,* and *might mind the same thing* *.

Let us daily bow our knees in the most importunate supplications to the God of grace and of peace, that this happy number may be increased; and as he is from time to time laying those in the dust, who were once the joy of our assemblies, and the glory of their profession, let us tenderly feel, let us deeply lament the desolations of his sanctuary †. And let us earnestly pray, that he would raise up in all the churches a generation of faithful and laborious, serious and spiritual, candid and evan-

* Phil. iii. 16.

† N. B. This sermon was preached a few days after the death of that great man of God, the truly reverend and excellent Mr. David Some of Harborough, whom God was pleased to favour with a serene and cheerful exit, suited to the eminent piety and usefulness of his life. His dying command hath silenced the attempt which some of his surviving friends would gladly have made, to embalm his memory for the instruction of those that are yet to come; but I am well satisfied, that considering how very generally he was known, he has left a most honourable testimony in the hearts of thousands, that he was one of the brightest ornaments of the gospel and the ministry which the age hath produced; and that all who had any intimacy with him, must have esteemed his friendship amongst the greatest blessings of life, and the loss of him amongst its greatest calamities. He died May 29, 1737, in his 57th year; and surely I have never seen greater reason to cry out, *My Father, my Father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

gelical ministers, that *Instead of the fathers there may be the children* ‡, by means of whom *a people* that are yet *to be born* may *see the salvation of our God* in its genuine glories.

And this, in connection with the subject before us, might also lead us farther to reflect, how important a part of an education for the ministry it is, to endeavour to lead young people into the knowledge of this Jesus, whom their office obligeth them to preach and to serve. Polite literature is not by any means to be neglected, nor will it be despised by any but those who know not what it is, yet surely it is not *the one thing needful.* The sacred scriptures are the grand magazine whence the most important, and therefore I think by far the greatest number of academical lectures are to be drawn. And they who are honoured with a charge of so great importance to the church should surely be concerned, that those of the rising age, in whose hands this invaluable treasure of the gospel is to be deposited, may not rest in a cold speculative acquaintance, either with the evidences, or contents of it; but may feel its vital transforming power, and speak of this great Redeemer as of one on whom they have themselves believed, and whom their own souls do most cordially love.

But I must wave the prosecution of these copious reflections, to conclude with two, which are yet more immediately the concern of those who attend the gospel ordinances; and which I would particularly recommend to you my friends of this society, who are now, through divine providence, so well settled with a *workman that needs not be ashamed,* and one whom you so highly and justly esteem.

Think how solicitous you should be to know and acknowledge Christ Jesus as your Lord.

I know you think it your happiness often to hear of him, O let it not be in vain. Own his authority in your lives as well as your assemblies, or those who have most frequently preached him to you, will be the swiftest and severest witnesses against you in that dreadful day, when all that have not bowed to his sceptre must fall by his sword.

And, to add no more, think also how willing you should be to use the assistance of your ministers, as your servants for Jesus sake.

Do not neglect to attend on their ministrations, and thereby shut out wisdom and piety at its first entrance. Do not increase their burden by any unkind usage, lest, by weakening their spi-

‡ Psal. xlv. 16.

rits, you may injure yourselves, and disable them from doing you that service, in which they are cheerfully spending their lives, though perhaps they apprehend they are thereby shortening them.

And, once more, be not unwilling to use a proper freedom with them in your religious concerns. Officiously to pry into the secrets of families and persons, is a meanness which a generous man will scorn; and particularly to know them is a burden, and often a snare too, which a wise man will gladly decline: but some knowledge of your spiritual state and experience is necessary to our knowing how to address you, and to address God on your account. Nor can you expect such suitable assistance from your spiritual physicians, as might otherwise be hoped for, if you will not communicate to them some particulars of your complaints.

On the whole, my dearly beloved, *Fulfil you our joy* *, and let it be your great care so to receive our message, and so to improve it, that it may be the delight of our souls now to proclaim the honours of our Redeemer amongst you, as your servants for Jesus sake, and that the more tenderly we love you, the more abundant satisfaction we may find in our present labours, and our future account. Amen.

* Phil. ii. 2.

# SERMON II.

## A CHARGE

*Delivered at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, on August 12, 1742, at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. John Jennings.*

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I DOUBT not but your own sagacity has prevented me in observing, that the discourse we have been just now hearing is in effect a charge, though with great dexterity couched under the form of a popular address. Your general work has been well represented to you, and you have been instructed as to the authority by which you are to act in it, the subject on which you are chiefly to insist, and the end which you are to pursue. The particular offices in which you are to endeavour to serve Christ, in serving the souls of men, have also been happily touched upon; and the grand arguments which should engage you to attend this service, with diligence, resolution and delight, have been powerfully suggested. It would therefore be easy for me to go over all the most natural branches of it, in an application of it to you, by which I might well answer the whole purpose of the province particularly assigned to me, in the work of this day. But lest by such a repetition I should seem unseasonably sparing of my own labour, as well as a sense of my inability to express these things in a more agreeable manner, than that in which they have already been handled, I shall now attempt a method something different; only observing, that the hints I am now to address to you will appear with some peculiar advantage, when considered in their connection with the preceding discourse.

I am willing to believe, Sir, that in consequence of what my reverend brother has been laying before you, your heart is now glowing with a vigorous, yet humble resolution, that, in the divine strength, you will emulate the character and conduct of the great apostle, and will *preach not yourself, but Christ*

*Jesus the Lord;* and that you will be ready to approve yourself the *servant*, the lowly affectionate servant, of the meanest of your brethren *for his sake.* I will suppose your enquiry to be, How may I serve this great master in the most acceptable and successful manner? How may I conduct myself, so as another day to hear him saying to me, *Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord**? I know not how to answer such an enquiry better, in a few words, than to remind you of another lively and proper expression of the same apostle St. Paul, when speaking of the blessed God he says, *I serve him with my spirit in the gospel of his Son* †. You serve God in the same gospel.—I hope it will indeed be the same.—God forbid we should any of us introduce any other. Labour therefore to do it *with your spirit*, with all the united powers of your soul, and labour at all times to keep your spirit in a proper situation for it.

For your assistance in this respect, I shall make it my present business to shew you, as well as I can, what must be the situation and temper of that spirit, which would, in the happiest manner, serve Christ in the great work you have this day undertaken. This will give me an opportunity of suggesting hints which will have their use, not in this or that particular respect alone, but in every circumstance through which you pass, and in every service to which you are called out, *That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished* and prepared *to every good work* ‡. Nor can I think of any thing which appears to me a more proper supplement to the many particular advices I have given you, with respect to your business as a preacher and a pastor, in those academical lectures on that subject which you have heard from me, and the hints of which are still in your hand. Permit me now to remind you that they come recommended to you by a very material circumstance, as several important passages in them were taken from the lectures of my honoured tutor your reverend and worthy father; whose name will long be precious in the churches, and my relation to whom I must always esteem as, under God, one of the greatest blessings of my life. You will no doubt frequently review them, and pardon me if I say, you will in effect hear two fathers speaking in them, with an united voice; if the most endearing affection, and the most intimate converse, even from your infant years, can give me a title to that tender name.

If you desire to serve Christ with your spirit in his gospel,

*Mat. xxv. 21. † Rom. i. 9. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 17.

I confess you undertake a difficult task. So difficult, that were there not a much better spirit than our own, in the strength of which we attempt it, even *The supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ** himself, I know not how any of us could encourage our younger brethren, or how we could find any encouragement ourselves, in the midst of so many infirmities, temptations, and oppositions. But at once exhorting you, my dear *Son, to be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus* †, and praying, as the apostle expresses it, that the *Lord Jesus Christ may be with your spirit* ‡, I proceed to give you some hints, as to that frame and temper in which it must be your business, and mine, to preserve our spirits, if we desire they may be fit for so great a service. And my younger brethren who hear me this day, of whom there is so large an appearance, will I hope consider a great deal of what is now to be said, as their own concern as well as ours, and lay it up in their memories, as against their own ordination-day. Not to say how much every preacher, and every private christian is obliged, on the common principles of religion, to cultivate the main branches of the temper I am to recommend. Now, with respect to this, I may indeed say as Solomon does, *Keep thine heart with all keeping* §; bestow the utmost attention upon it, and let every thing be done that can be imagined, with any appearance of propriety, in subserviency to so great an end. May it be your constant care, and the grand, noble point of your ambition, to have a mind as well ordered as possible. So that no one irregular affection may be admitted or encouraged, no one good affection wanting or languid. But the general exhortation may farther be illustrated in such particulars as these which I shall touch upon, not as exhausting the subject, but as containing some of the most material instances of watchfulness and duty, to which it may lead.

Be solicitous, my dear friend, if you would *serve God with your spirit in the gospel of his Son*, that your spirit be habitually devout—and humble—that it be elevated and free—that it be attentive, and active—that it be courageous and resolute—that it be tender and gentle.

1, 2. Let it be your care that your spirit be evangelically devout; that it be set upon God, upon God in Christ. He is your Master, and you are always in his sight; labour to act as continually in it. Converse much with him and you will love him the more, and, by a very natural consequence, you will serve him the better. Labour after the knowledge of the divine

* Phil. i. 19. † 2 Tim. ii. 1. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 22. § Prov. iv. 23.

Being, so far as feeble mortals can attain it: and see to it that it be a practical knowledge, affecting your heart with those powerful emotions of reverence and love, due to the great Father of the world, and to your God and Father in Christ. Know and honour him under the various views in which he appears by the light of nature and revelation, realizing to your own mind continually, his existence and his presence—"O my soul, there is a God, and such a God as I discourse of to others—and he is this day, this moment, present with me, and observing what regard I will shew him, and what effect all the discoveries he has made of his greatness and goodness will have upon my mind and my life."

Let this engage you to make devotion a considerable part of your business, and to attend to it as such. You will often be speaking to God, in the name and presence of others; and a regard to your own reputation will engage you then to address him, in a solemn, reverend, composed and affectionate manner. It will engage you to awaken and regulate your thoughts, while employed in social prayer, which indeed seems to me by far the most difficult part of our public work, as performed in such assemblies as ours. But surely that minister has great reason to suspect the integrity of his own heart that can pray with some copiousness, affection, and pleasure with others, and in secret can only find in his heart to run over a few hasty, inattentive, and customary words, in such a manner as he would be ashamed to do, if any one of his fellow-creatures was present. Guard against this, my dear brother; and especially guard against it in the evening, when the fatigues arising from the labour of the day, may expose you to the peculiar danger of it. And for that purpose take time to retire, if possible, before the fatigue becomes too great and sensible, that there may be flame for the evening sacrifice. Be assured, that as prayer is the food and breath of all practical religion, if I may be allowed the expression, so secret prayer in particular is of vast importance; insomuch that I verily believe that if a man were to keep a particular and accurate journal of his own heart but for one month, he would find as real and exact a correspondency between the temper of his soul at seasons of secret devotion, and in other parts of his life, as we find between the changes of the barometer, and of the weather.

To furnish out matter for prayer, let meditation be called in to your assistance; and let the word of God, above all, be the subject of your meditation. You know it is placed among the most distinguishing characters of a good man, that *His de-*

*light is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night**. Various matter of prayer may by this means be suggested, and the soul brought into a proper frame for pouring out itself before God. Observe in what channel the devotion of David and Asaph ran in the Old Testament, and that of Paul, John, and the other apostles under the New, and, above all, that of our great Lord; and labour, with allowances for the difference of circumstances, to have your heart affected with divine things, as theirs seem to have been.

Labour not only to breathe out this temper before God in the seasons of solemn devout retirement, for which you will do well to have your hours and your plan, to be, if possible, strictly and resolutely observed, but also endeavour to carry it along with you into the world: and be lifting up your heart to God, in many of those little vacancies of time, which often hang on the hands even of the busiest of mankind, but might this way be profitably employed. Why should you, for several hours together, be in the presence of such a master, and such a friend, without speaking one word to him? Or why should any of his most affectionate servants, in former ages, have addressed him with a devotion warmer and more constant than yours! If this advice be observed, you will also be glad to have an occasional errand to the throne of grace, will be heartily glad to sweeten the hours of friendly conversation, by making them subservient to communion with God. It will gladden you often to conclude your visits with prayer, and cheerfully to come into any scheme of seeking God in a more solemn and express manner, on any particular emergencies that may arise relating to yourself and friends; as also to encourage, what we commonly call, private meetings for social prayer at stated times, which, so far as I can judge, greatly promote a minister's usefulness, and which are generally kept up with the greater spirit, and the best order, when he accustoms himself to be often present at them.

But permit me, Sir, before I dismiss this head, to remind you, that it is evangelical devotion I am recommending: a devotion in which a due regard is habitually maintained, to the love and grace of Christ, and to the influence of his good Spirit. Indeed one would think, if a man believed the gospel, his devotions should naturally and unavoidably take this turn. Would to God we could find it so; nevertheless this I may confidently say, so far as reason and experience can justify a confidence in saying any thing, that very much will depend upon turning our

* Psal. i. 2.

thoughts into the channel to which the gospel has directed them, and viewing things in the light in which that has placed them. No devotion so sweet, and none so lasting as that which is thus guided and animated. Remember it is the gospel in which you are serving him; and you can never serve him so effectually, as by a close and constant attendance to it. Keep your heart therefore full of those impressions, which it will naturally introduce into an attentive mind. Think what a friend the blessed Jesus has been to you, and how much you are, and must for ever be indebted to his life and death, his resurrection and ascension, his guardianship and intercession. And when this view grows daily familiar to your own soul, your *Heart will teach your mouth, and add* this best kind of *knowledge to your lips**. So that you will be in no danger of starving or destroying the souls of your hearers, as I fear many who should be ministers of the gospel do, by a criminal and fatal silence upon these heads: and this will happily influence you to all humility of spirit in the service of Christ; for nothing has so great a tendency to humble the soul, as the sight and converse of the blessed and glorious Jehovah, in whose presence we are *less than nothing, and vanity:* especially when we consider ourselves as introduced to him by the blood of Christ; and formed and animated by his own spirit, in every thing which is pleasing, in every thing which is not offensive to him. Pride, my dear brother, is one of the most subtle, and one of the most dangerous enemies that you will encounter with, in the whole course of your christian and ministerial warfare. It is at once astonishing and grievous, to think under how many specious forms it insinuates itself into the very sanctuary of God, and hides itself, if I may be allowed the expression, even under the vestments of those who serve at his altar; indeed frustrating its own most darling end, and exposing them at once to the displeasure of God, and, to what they seem yet more to fear, the contempt of men. You must therefore continually and constantly guard against it; and make it one of the chief cares of your life, not only to suppress its growth, but to root it out of your soul.

If you would be honourable in the sight of the Lord whom you serve, you must be humble; and that humility must be seated, not merely in the external behaviour, but in the heart. A small degree of common sense may be sufficient to preserve a man from the ridiculous folly of making encomiums upon him-

* Prov. xvi. 23.

self, and his own performances; or from the madness of putting on imperious airs in common life, which is indeed no other than bespeaking the scorn and aversion of all about us. I had almost said, a manly pride will set a minister above these things, and teach him to curb every appearance of them. But our humility should dwell in our very souls: and I am well persuaded the greatest and the best of men, may find enough in themselves to nourish it from day to day. When I think, for instance, what the man and the minister, in the most perfect view of his character, ought to be, in comparison with what I myself am: when I look about on all the negligences and irregularities of my life; when I look in especially on all the folly and corruption of my heart; and farther recollect, that all these things are open to the eyes of God, who sees what I am, and what I have done, in comparison with what I should have been, and should have done; in comparison to what I might have been, and might have done, for his glory, and the good of mankind, if all my capacities, and all my opportunities had been improved to the highest possible degree! what reason do I find for the deepest abasement in the divine presence? What reason to abhor, rather than applaud myself; to hide my head with conscious blushes, rather than to lift it up in a haughty and supercilious manner, as if I had *whereof to glory* before God or man! It is not a freedom from gross matter of reproach among men, no, nor some distinguishing share of genius, of learning, of eloquence, of reputation and popularity, that will raise a man's esteem for himself, when such views as these are made familiar to the mind. He will apprehend it to be, at least a supposable, and indeed a very probable case, that many, who, in these things, and in the eye of the world, are his inferiors, may, on account of their better temper and conduct, be, in the eyes of God, far superior to him; and may be fitted for much more distinguished honours in that world which is to fix our rank for ever: and we shall certainly find it very much for our own ease and comfort in life, thus to *Esteem others better than ourselves, in honour preferring one another**. When we do not look upon any distinguishing regards as our due, if we miss them we shall not be much disappointed, and if they meet us, we shall think ourselves obliged to the world for its kind partiality in our favour; and behave so much the more humbly, while we endeavour indeed to be, what they are so kind as to think we are: and thus, in more senses than one, it will be prudent for him, *Who would be the greatest*, to *be the least and*

* Phil. ii. 3. Rom. xii. 10.

*servant of all**. Our blessed Redeemer is such an example of this amiable temper, that nothing in the world illustrates the natural pride and corruption of the human heart more, than that this lesson is so little learnt and practised, by those who call themselves his disciples, and even his ministers.

3. Let it be your concern to preserve a due freedom and elevation of spirit. I join these together, as being nearly of a kin, and the latter only a superior degree of the former. And therefore when I mention liberty of mind, you will apprehend I intend not only, or chiefly what the world calls freedom of sentiment. You have long since been taught to indulge that, and have I hope taken your religion from the word of God, and not from any human system or composition whatever. Go on to act upon this maxim. I dare not say, like St. Paul, *Continue in the things thou hast learnt, and been assured of* by me, *knowing of whom thou hast learned them*†. It rather becomes me to say, examine all I have taught you, and *Search the scriptures daily whether these things are so* or no‡. You will not, I am persuaded, run the matter to extremes, and imagine, like some half-thinkers, that liberty consists in boldly daring to decide against received opinions, as soon as some new difficulties are discerned; and confidently venting raw and undigested notions, however noxious, without fearing any of the consequences. And while you guard against this, I am not so conscious of the weakness of any cause in which I am embarked, as to fear it should be brought to the test of strict enquiry. But this enquiry, how well soever guarded and regulated, is not the whole that I mean by freedom. I intend something much nobler and greater; something which many who boast loudly of their liberty are entirely ignorant of, I mean a freedom from all undue attachments to every thing that would debase and enslave the mind, and render a man the ignominious servant of corruption.

If Paul thought it proper to say to Timothy, *Keep thyself pure*, and *flee youthful lusts* §, the admonition cannot be unseasonable to any who are early in life entering on the ministry. And indeed, if, after so many years spent in the apostolic office, he represented it as a daily labour of his life, to *Keep under his body, and bring it under subjection*‖; we may reasonably conclude, that the most advanced servants of Christ had need to be cautious on this head; had need, while they dwell in animal

* Mark x. 44. †2 Tim. iii. 14. ‡ Acts xvii. 11. § 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 Tim. ii. 22. ‖ 1 Cor. ix. 27.

body, to *Watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation**. Especially considering that some of the excesses to which unguarded appetite may betray a man, are of such a nature, as to fix a lasting stain upon his character. A minister especially may, in one single hour, incur a reproach, which past and future years of the strictest temperance shall not be able to avert, remove, or efface. Yet I cannot but say, that to a person in whom the habits of a temperate and regular life are formed, I apprehend the passions to be much more dangerous enemies than the appetites; and especially those excesses of the passions which are generally, among virtuous and worthy men, reckoned weak rather than infamous. By these has many a wise and good man been miserably enslaved, and fallen far beneath the dignity of his character and office; not to mention the unhappy consequences they have often drawn after them, with respect to the ease and comfort of future life.

Wisdom is not indeed intended to root out the passions, but she seldom dwells in the heart in which they are suffered to grow wild. They turn the soul into a desart, and render it a disagreeable abode to so divine a guest; or rather, to speak in language more becoming a christian divine, the blessed Spirit of God is by this means driven away, and it is impossible to say how much the evil spirit may sometimes do, in his absence, to irritate our minds and drive them into the most fatal extremes. It must therefore be of great importance to keep a resolute guard on these turbulent subjects, and to check the first rising of sedition among them; lest they gather strength by insensible degrees, and break out into such open rebellion, as to depose reason and religion from the throne, reducing the soul into a state of anarchy; or rather making its noble rational powers the slaves of those, whom they were formed to command.

To be secure from all the danger, and all the appearances of so great an evil, let it be your care, Sir, to maintain a becoming elevation of spirit, and to fill your mind with sublime ideas, principles and views. This the christian religion naturally suggests to all its votaries, and above all to its ministers. Think, what a master you serve, and in what a work you are engaged! Think how little all the titles which the princes of this world can give must appear, when compared with that of the minister of Jesus, and a servant of God in the salvation of souls. Think how low the employments of secular life are, even those in which the nobles and kings of the earth are engaged, in comparison with

* Mat. xxvi. 41.

yours. In this respect, it is good to *Magnify our office**; not as if it gave us any the least power to tyrannize over our brethren, to invade their liberty of thinking, or of acting, or to command their properties in any degree. Secular power seems too inconsiderable a thing for our Master to give to servants, whom he has set so high in his family, and intends for a charge so much greater and more important, in which the exercise of that would necessarily interrupt them. We are appointed to be, in subordination to Christ, the friends, the guardians, the deliverers of souls; and if our labour succeeds, the effect is everlasting. All the productions of human art and industry shall perish; the palaces and citadels which it raises shall moulder back to dust, and be levelled with the earth; the mightiest nations, whose interests divide the globe, shall soon be blended together, and distinguished no more. But every soul whom we recover to Christ and to holiness, will be an everlasting monument of the power of divine grace, and of our fidelity in our Master's service; will be an honour and delight to us, ten thousand thousand thousand years after the earth itself has been removed out of its place. Think and act like one that has such grand schemes in view; like one who is continually realizing to himself the presence of God, and the prospect of immortality, and has learnt by them not an affected and counterfeited, but a real contempt for the pleasures and interests of this perishing state; like one who has learnt heartily to pity those whom mistaken mortals imagine the objects of congratulation, or of envy.

4. Let it be your constant care to keep your spirit attentive and active.

The great employments and views in which you are engaged, should, methinks, effectually engage you to this. Since the work is so grand, and to be carried on in the midst of so much opposition, as you well know is to be expected from the indispositions and corruptions of our own hearts, and the influence of so subtle and so powerful an enemy as the prince of darkness is, you will naturally apprehend that many difficulties and obstructions will arise; so that you had need exercise an habitual prudence, both to guard against temptations, and to seize opportunities; precious but transient opportunities, which perhaps if they are once suffered to slip by, may never return. "Bright as the heavenly world appears to my view and my hopes," says an eminent christian in one of his letters, "I am sometimes afraid of going thither, till I have done something considerable for the service

* Rom. xi. 13.

of Christ upon earth." Methinks such a thought as this, while the uncertainty of human life is remembered, should engage us to a watchfulness of soul, should lead us every hour to recollect, "What can I do for my great and glorious Master? What can I do for him immediately? Supposing this should be the very last day I have to spend in his service, how may he find me employed in a manner that will be most acceptable to him?"

Labour, in this view, to do good every day, and every day to do as much good as possible; and if any thing can conveniently be done to-day, defer it not, by any means, till to-morrow. *To-morrow* is God's, and not yours; and if it come, and find you here in a capacity of service, it *will* so far *take thought for the things of itself**, that whatever you can do to-day, there will be business enough remain, for that, and for the next day too, and for all the days and hours God shall assign you. Therefore, Sir, guard not only against a slothful and inactive temper, but against unnecessary delay. Here are certain duties so apparently great and important, that Satan himself has not the assurance so much as to propose it to us, that we should come to a resolution, that we will always omit them. All he will demand is, that you would this day wait for a more convenient opportunity, and continue waiting to-morrow, and so on for one day more, till he can find you no more excuse for further procrastination. And it is by this artifice, palpable as it is, that he enervates the usefulness of the greater part of christians; that he makes their life but a shadow of what it might be, and sinks them into so insignificant a kind of being, that one would imagine a rational soul should be continually upbraiding itself with its own importance, while its noble furniture and capacity is employed to such low purposes; and instead of acting, is only dreaming first of one vanity, and then of another; always intending to be wise and useful hereafter, but not allowing itself so much as to say when. I have always observed that those tradesmen who are most solicitous to execute their orders immediately, give the greatest satisfaction to others, and generally improve their own stock best. But alas, *The children of this world are*, in this respect, and almost every other, *wiser than the children of light* †. I would only add, that as growing years will naturally impair the activity of the spirits, it will be your wisdom, while you are young, to accustom yourself to vigour and dispatch, that so the force of habit in riper years may be some equivalent for the want of the vivacity which

* Mat. vi. 34. † Luke xvi. 8.

will then, in the course of nature, be diminished. And I really think activity and cheerfulness to be so nearly allied, that one can hardly take a more effectual method to secure the latter, than to cultivate the former. Especially when, as in the present instance, it is employed to sow the seed of an immortal harvest, which will be rich and glorious, in proportion to our present diligence and zeal.

5. In order to this activity, it will be necessary to see to it, that your spirit is maintained in a courageous and a resolute temper.

The difficulty and obstructions which I hinted under the former head will render this necessary, and necessary in proportion to your diligence: just as the resistance of any dense fluid, through which a body is moved, acts more forcibly, in proportion to the velocity with which the body is impelled. You must therefore lay your account thus; the ministry is not an easy employment; it will not always go on smoothly; many entanglements will arise, even from the pleasantness of our circumstances, from the kindness of our friends, many of whose importunities we must break through, if we desire to improve our time well, and to pursue the business in which we are engaged; and in the execution of some part of it, other and greater difficulties must be expected. It is possible you may not be able faithfully to discharge your duty, without greatly disobliging some whom you respect and love; some on whom your temporal circumstances may very much depend. Perhaps you may be obliged, in conscience, to bear a public testimony against their errors, or against their irregularities, and it may be against both, as they are frequent companions: or at least you may be obliged plainly to admonish them in private, and expostulate with them in a manner that they may not be disposed to bear; even after all the most prudent address on your side, to make it as inoffensive as is consistent with fidelity. Nor is it impossible that in consequence of some distant and unforeseen change in public affairs, you may be called forth even to martyrdom, and obliged either to resist to blood, or to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. An heroic resolution must therefore be put on, that in the strength of Christ you will *Be faithful to the death* *; that your master may be pleased, whoever is displeased, and that your crown of glory may be secure, whatever else is lost. And it will be the part of christian prudence some-

* Rev. ii. 10.

times to exercise a voluntary self-denial, in smaller matters, that it may become easier to you in circumstances of considerable difficulty, importance and necessity. But while you are *setting your face like a flint* in the midst of all the most violent and forcible opposition,

6. Let this courage and resolution be tempered with a becoming degree of tenderness and gentleness.

Labour to preserve your mind continually under the influences of benevolence and love. Remember you serve the most benevolent of masters, in the most benevolent of works. The whole business of your life is to do good, and therefore, to make that business easy, cultivate love; for the labours of love are easy labours, and are indeed no other than their own reward.

Indulge to a continued sensibility of heart. Be willing to look upon the sorrows of others, and to feel them, and live continually mindful of the common tie of brotherhood and of kind. Look upon the human family as one, and then do all you can to make it an orderly and happy family. Especially cultivate love and compassion to the souls of men. Seriously think what an immortal soul is, and to what extreme danger the souls of multitudes are exposed. Think also in how languid a state religion is, so far as actions can discover it, in the souls of many, concerning whom, charity would hope that they are not quite estranged from all the principles of the divine life; and long earnestly to bring them into a more healthful state, and to see them lively and active.

Under this head let me recommend to you a tender love for the rising generation, and particularly for little children, dear amiable creatures, who, one would think, should need no advocate to plead their cause, with a person of a humane and generous disposition. Christ was an example of condescending regard to them, and he certainly meant to teach it to us. Learn this meekness and lowliness from him. Converse with them, instruct them, and as you are often praying for them, be sometimes praying with them too; and for that purpose appoint a number of them at proper seasons to attend you, and then, when you have talked with them in a free and affectionate manner about the things of religion, pray over them, in such easy natural language as they are most likely to understand, and recommend them to God with that tenderness of heart which their presence will naturally inspire.

I have often observed numbers of them melt into tears upon this occasion; and when that is the case, it is a secret encouragement to hope, that even while we are praying, God

hears. And would parents sometimes try the same method with their children, and appoint but a few minutes every week to pray with them alone, they might find, as to my certain knowledge some pious parents have done, not only that it had a good tendency to compose and soften the temper of those little creatures, but possibly, in some instances, to give such a turn to the mind of those grown up to some maturity, as might be carried through the remainder of life; and fixed upon, as the probable season from whence their conversion to God might take its first rise.

While I am on this head, I must exhort you also, to condescend to the least and weakest, as well as the youngest. Remember you can never stoop so low to others, as Christ has stooped to you; and that, when you have done all, your great master will exceed you in condescension, as much as he does in glory.

Let this tenderness also engage you to enter into the sorrows of others; *who*, says St. Paul, *is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* i. e. feel fire, as it were, kindled in my bosom, which makes me restless till I have done all I conveniently can to make him easy. You, Sir, must accustom yourself to *bear the burdens of others, that you may fulfil the law of Christ*, and with greater advantage teach others to fulfil it. You must not shun the cottages of the poor, or the chambers of the languishing; nor must your ear be so intent on the more pleasing sounds, as to turn away from the sighs and groans of the distressed. You must often be visiting your brethren, that you may see how they do; and their personal or domestic afflictions must be tenderly weighed, in their various circumstances, that your heart may feel its part, and so prompt you to do all you can, if possible to remove them; or if that be impracticable, as it often will be, at least to alleviate them; and sometimes the sight and conversation of a christian friend does so much to alleviate them, that one would imagine so cheap a charity should not be denied. Let not our master say, in reference to any of his servants, *I was sick and ye visited me not* *; I was confined and ye did not come unto me. You will, I hope, be ready according to your ability, to relieve the necessitous: you will also, I hope, improve your interest among your christian friends, to procure that relief which you cannot immediately give; and be assured that, while thus employed, you are

* Mat. xxv. 43.

performing a kind action toward the rich and the prosperous, many of whom are so ready to forget the indigent and afflicted, that when one thinks upon the great day of account, one is ready, as the world generally appears, to congratulate the poor, and to tremble for the rich. Let benevolence to both, therefore, remind you of St. Paul's words to Timothy, *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life* *.

And before I close this head, I must also beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, that you endeavour to exercise a meek and gentle temper under contradiction and opposition. I hope and believe you will meet with very little of this sort, from so kind, so generous, and so obliging a people, as that to which you have the happiness of being related: yet there is no soil so good, but some root of bitterness may spring up in it, and if not among your own people, and among your nearest brethren in the ministry, yet among others injuries may arise; but if you are *reviled, revile not again;* if you are injured, let forgiveness be all your revenge; for it is all christianity allows, and all that is good for us to take. And if you should, which is always too supposable a case, be called out to combat with error and immorality, venture to do it in the spirit of meekness. It is the method which the God of truth and holiness has taught us. *The servant of the Lord*, says the apostle, *must not strive, but must be gentle towards all men, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance* †. We must be cautious lest the old serpent find out a way of brooding over our hearts, and diffuse his venom there, while we mistake the fermentation it occasions to be only a warmth of zeal for Christ, and so do the work of his enemy in his name. I cannot, for my part, apprehend satire to be an ordinance of Christ; at least I believe, he will be more ready to excuse those who have erred on the tender, than on the severe extreme. The knowledge I have had of your natural disposition, prevents my enlarging on this head, which, with regard to you alone, it might not here have been material to mention: nevertheless it is a sin that easily besets young divines, who, as I suppose, with their wits

* 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. † 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

and passions warm about them, have had the chief hand in bringing theological fury into a proverb. As for you, Sir, whatever personal ill usage you may meet with in life, *Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good**, and trust in him who has given you the command, to bear you harmless while you are careful to observe it. Goodness will, on the whole, not only be safe, but victorious; and the wisdom of this and all the other rules of our great master, will be demonstrated, not so much by debate, as by experience. Go on, therefore, my dear friend and brother, not only in this respect, but in all others, to conduct your spirit by these, and you will find them your ornament and defence. The satisfaction of a well-governed, and of an acceptable and successful ministry, will infinitely over-balance all the pains you can take with your spirit, to keep it in such a temper. God will approve the effect of his Holy Spirit's agency on your heart; and when I have said you will be the object of his approbation and delight, it is little to say the happy fruits of this care, which will appear in the sight of your fellow-creatures, will entitle you to their veneration and affection, and gain a degree of both, which neither the exalted stations, the most flourishing circumstances, or the most extensive genius and learning, could possibly secure in the neglect of these things. And as there is no room to doubt but divine grace will bless your labours, while conducted on such principles, you will be continually laying up in store new treasures, to be possessed in the celestial world, among multitudes whom God will make you an instrument of bringing into the way to it, or of conducting in those peaceful and blissful paths.

I conclude with exhorting you, my friends of this congregation, to continue your affectionate regards to my dear brother, who has now commenced a more intimate relation to you than before, and is become your pastor. Never give him reason to repent that he is so, and that he has preferred you to other congregations, who would gladly have engaged his settlement among them. Encourage his valuable labours by your constant attendance, and by your friendly care for his support: above all, endeavour to improve in religion by his means. I am well satisfied that he *Seeks not yours but you* †, and will think he *Lives* indeed, *if you stand*

* Rom. xii. 21. † 2 Cor. xii. 14.

*fast in the Lord**. You will not, I persuade myself, grieve him by any personal unkindness; God grant that none of you may distress his soul, by undoing your own! God grant that none of you may send him back to his great master with lamentation, on account of your refusing to accept of that message of pardon and life he brings! I do indeed hope *Better things of you, and things that accompany salvation*†; and conclude with my hearty prayer, that he may rejoice in every soul of you in the day of the Lord, *That he has not run in vain, nor laboured in vain*‡. Amen.

* 1 Thess. iii. 8. † Heb. vi. 9. ‡ Phil. ii. 16.

# SERMON III.

## A CHARGE

*Delivered at Norwich, on June 20, 1745, at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Abraham Tozer.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

WHEN I consider the rational and edifying manner, in which the solemnities of ordination-days amongst us are adjusted and conducted, and recollect what I hope I may justly call the various and delightful tokens of the divine presence in our assemblies on such occasions, I cannot but esteem it my happiness to have been an attendant on so many of them. My memory goes back with joy to many former years, in each of which providence has given me, in one part of our country or another, to see young ministers, who have a *Good report of all men, and of the truth itself**, after having approved themselves to christian societies, generally by some considerable series of probationary labours, unanimously chosen by the respective churches, and invited to the pastoral office over them without one dissenting voice. With delight have I heard their faithful and affectionate testimony to the great truths of the gospel, in judicious summaries of the christian religion, drawn up by them in such expressions as they freely chose, without the imposition of human forms; summaries, which, in this connection, I must acknowledge to have been in the number of the most affecting and edifying public discourses. If I have ever known the spirit of prayer poured forth, as in a kind of celestial torrent, to add at once dignity, sanctity, and transport to our assemblies, it has been on such occasions: And the exhortations of my brethren in their sermons and charges, have often been the means of humbling, of melting, and of animating my soul.

The present pleasure attending these sacred hours, the religious improvement received from what has passed in them, the

* 3 John, ver. 12.

cheering prospect which they give relating to the church in future years, and even in generations yet to come, do all concur to demand my thankfulness, that I have so often on such seasons been called to *Go with the multitude to the house of God**. But I will freely own, the enjoyment has often been abated by the obligation I have been under to officiate, not only in some public work, but especially in the part which is now devolved upon me. Nor should I, after having delivered so many charges, as well as opened my heart so fully to you, dear Sir, in a more private manner, on almost every subject relating to the ministry, know how to set myself with any spirit to what must be in a great measure a repetition of former things; if I did not recollect, that what is immediately addressed to one's self, in the midst of such peculiar solemnities, may have some singular weight, beyond what the same thing would have in a more private address, or if thus publicly offered to another person. And therefore I persuade myself, you will hear me with all attention and regard, while I give a little vent to the fulness of my heart, in such fraternal congratulations, admonitions and encouragements, as may suit the present occasion, and may, by the divine blessing, be of some service to you, and my other beloved and honoured brethren, who are sharing in the honours, the labours, and the burdens of this evangelical ministry, to the full exercise of which you have now been solemnly called and set apart.

I. Let me most cordially and affectionately congratulate you, my dear brother, that you have now been thus publicly called and devoted to the ministerial and pastoral office.

Paul esteemed it matter of most joyful reflection, when he said, *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, that he hath counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry*†. And I thank him from my soul, as the great head of the church, that he is still raising a succession of those who are to bear it, and that you, dear Sir, are numbered among them. I most heartily congratulate you, on the honour,—the pleasure,—and the usefulness of that station of life, on which you now enter.

1. I congratulate you on the honour of your office.

For with whatever contempt ignorant and profane men may treat it, it is highly honourable in its simplest forms; and needs none of the external ornaments which men can hang about it, to render it so. If it be honourable, to be, though confessedly in a lower sense, than the title was applicable to the apostles, *An*

* Psal. xlii. 4. † 1 Tim. i. 12.

*embassador of Christ*, and *a man of God*, you have that honour. If it be honourable, to sustain the highest trust, that can, in the methods of common providence, be reposed in mortal man, even to have *The glorious gospel of the blessed God committed to our charge* *, and to be made guardians of souls which are to exist for ever:———If it be honourable, to bear an office which was sanctified by Christ, who himself bore it, and by bearing it has dignified it for ever; an office, which is mentioned in the sacred oracles, as the great gift of Christ to his church; as the immediate, though not the ultimate end of the most visible and extraordinary effusion of his Spirit:———For *When he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, he gave gifts unto men;* and distributed the royal donative, *giving first apostles, then prophets, then evangelists, then pastors and teachers; that* by it *holy men might be perfectly fitted for the work of the ministry, that so the body of Christ*, that is, his whole church, *might be edified* †, or *built up* ‡:———Rejoice, that your name is now, as it were, inserted in the catalogue of these his servants, and reflect frequently on the honour; not to be exalted above measure, but to be awakened and animated to a dignity and sanctity of behaviour correspondent to it.

2. Let me also congratulate you on the pleasures of that office, on which you are entered.

For pleasures mingle themselves amidst all its labours and difficulties, all its reproaches, and its persecutions; yea, when duly executed, it is a series of pleasures. Pleasures will meet you in your secret retirements; they will attend you here in the house of your God; they will follow you to the house of your friends: They will crown all your days, and above all your sabbaths: And these, rational, pure, sublime pleasures, which the man may approve, the christian relish, and which, did angels dwell in human flesh, they surely would pursue.

Must it not necessarily be pleasant to a devout heart, and God forbid, that any other should here be in question! to give itself up in secret to the contemplation of divine things, to search the rich mines of scripture, to investigate the glorious mysteries with which they are pregnant, and *Which angels stoop down that they may look into* §? to compare one part of the sacred oracles with another, that each may be illustrated by the comparison? to discover, I will not say new doctrines of importance, for I

* 1 Tim. i. 11. † Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.

‡ This version I think the original words will bear; προς τον καταρτισμον των αγιων εις εργον διακονιας, εις οικοδομην τε σωματος τε Χριστε.

§ 1 Pet. i. 12.

persuade myself, God has not left his christian church to learn them in these last days, but new illustrations of the great and acknowledged truths of his gospel, new beauties in the arrangement and expressions of particular texts, new methods of touching the hearts of men, by truths already familiar to their ear?

What can be more delightful also, than to rise up to lead the public devotions of a worshipping assembly? to spread before the blessed God, in their name, and our own, prayers and supplications, intercessions and thanksgivings? to remind them of the divine mercy? to proclaim among them the everlasting gospel; animated with a secret hope, (while meditating in private, while speaking in the assembly,) that by the divine blessing, the knowledge and love of God in a Redeemer may be shed abroad on some ignorant and wretched soul, hitherto destitute of it; and in many other instances, that truly christian sentiments may be kept alive, in hearts that have already received them, and be transmitted from the present to the next generation.

Nor can any subjects of conversation administer a nobler delight in the houses of your friends, than those which will naturally fall before you, as a minister. For if religion add so much sweetness and endearment to friendship, when contracted between persons of the most private characters, it must much more do it in such instances; where past ministerial services may be recollected, where the fruits of them may be made apparent, and the man of God more abundantly furnished for the future discharge of his office, in the most suitable and therefore the most edifying manner. Which naturally leads me,

3. To congratulate you on that prospect of usefulness, which this happy day may open upon you.

It is true, that how well so ever we may be furnished for the ministry, and how agreeable so ever we are placed in it, we must not hope, that our success will be universal: Hardly can we flatter ourselves, that it will be general. What are we *Better than our fathers* *? Or how comparable to our master? That we should never complain with them, and even with him, that we *Labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought* †? Yet we can ourselves witness, from what we have seen, and from what we have felt, the blessing that hath attended the ministry of others. And I trust, that even those of us, who are least advanced in life, least experienced in the work, have al-

* 1 Kings xix. 4. † Is. xlix. 4.

ready been favoured with some seals of our ministry, some who are as *letters of recommendation, written* as it were *by the hand of Christ himself* *; and that you, sir, will be thus honoured. Oh that it might be abundantly! Yes, I trust, God will give you to convert many. And if it were but one, who can express the happiness of saving one soul from death, of conducting one immortal creature to life and glory everlasting?

You will also, I doubt not, edify many by every public prayer you offer, and by every sermon you preach. Your words, proceeding from your own heart, will reach the hearts of others, and rekindle the languishing flame of devotion. Every virtue, and every grace will, I hope, flourish under your cultivation; while you strengthen, with renewed exhortations, every good resolution already formed: And the rising generation, growing up under your care, in concurrence with that of pious parents whom you animate to the important charge of their education, will, by insensible degrees, be furnished with the knowledge of religion, and brought, not only to the speculation, but to the sentiments and practice of it. So that while others have, it may be, their bags, their houses, their furniture, and their fields, to shew as the effect of their labours; you will have captives of satan, rescued from his tyranny, adopted into the family of God, and honoured with the privileges of his children, crouding his courts, and surrounding his table, as the infinitely more valuable fruits of yours. You will see the character of christians brightening from sabbath to sabbath, under your evangelical and practical instructions; their blemishes wearing out, and their graces contracting (as by exercise they will contract) more strength and more beauty continually.

God will also undoubtedly give you, to wipe the weeping eye, to chear the mourning heart; to be his instrument in taking off the burthen from tender depressed spirits; in which number you will sometimes find those, who may, (if any in the world may,) be justly called *The excellent of the earth* †. Christ, the great Lord of the church, will in many instances make you (as it were) the almoner of his bounty, and messenger of his love; while he is *giving to them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes*, and sending them *the garments of praise* in exchange *for the spirit of heaviness* ‡. Your kind offices, and the happy effects of them, will attend your friends, not only in all the darkest hours of preceding affliction, but even on their dying beds.

* 2 Cor. iii. 1, 3. † Ps. xvi. 3. ‡ Is. lxi. 3.

There will you animate their faith ; there will you be a *helper of their joy* *; and furnish the hand of the departing pilgrim, with the promises of God, as a sure staff, to support him in his way through all the gloomy horrors of the last valley, by which he must pass to the new Jerusalem.

By such traces of usefulness will you mark, as it were, the several years, and months, and days of life ; while the passage of so many others through it is like that of an arrow through the trackless air : Till at length you die with a pleasing consciousness, that you have not lived in vain, and rise to rewards never to be described by mortal voice, never to be conceived by the human heart, and of which I must not say any thing more now, as I am briefly to touch upon them in the concluding part of my discourse.

Now while you have these things in view, do you not, my brother, congratulate yourself upon this happy occasion ? I am persuaded, you do. I am persuaded, that your heart is even now bowing itself in secret thankfulness before God, that he hath honoured you with capacities for this work : that he hath furnished you with the means of a proper education for it ; and that his providence has at length called you out to it. Nor can your gratitude forget his distinguished goodness in settling you with so generous, so affectionate, and so pious a people, and now in the bonds of joint-pastorship with that faithful and venerable servant of Christ with whom you share the office †. You will, I doubt not, *Serve with him, as a son with a Father, in the gospel* of Christ ‡. Nor can the warmest friendship form a greater wish for you, than that you may learn by the daily opportunities of conversing with him, to improve more and more in that rich variety of christian and ministerial graces, which have for a long series of years rendered his name so honourable in our churches, and his flock so peculiarly happy. Oh that I could also congratulate you, and them, on returning and continued opportunities of learning, as formerly, by his public labours ? In the mean time, permit me with these cordial congratulations to intermingle,

II. Some faithful admonitions, relating to the labours,—the difficulties,—the oppositions, attending the station of life on which you are entered,—and the solemn account in which it is to terminate.

Of these indeed you have just now been reminded by my dear and honoured brother, in so judicious, and in so

* 2 Cor. i. 24. † The Rev. Mr. Thomas Scott. ‡ Phil. ii. 22.

pathetical a manner, that it is the less necessary for me to enlarge upon them. Yet were they to be wholly omitted by me in this discourse, it could hardly be called a charge; and I fear, it is a subject, on which we all need *Line upon line, and precept upon precept.* Let me therefore solemnly, though briefly, remind you,

1. Of the labours, that attend this situation of life.

These indeed are such, as will demand an almost uninterrupted attention of mind, and vigour of diligence. Labours await you at home, and abroad:——Labours on your own days, and on the sabbath; a day of rest to others, but to you of the most strenuous, though most delightful service:——Labours in the study; that knowledge may be increased; that provision may be made for public ministrations, with solidity, with perspicuity, with propriety, with energy, with tenderness:——Labours in the pulpit; that public devotions may be suitably and fervently poured out before God; and sermons so delivered, as, if possible, to command the attention of the auditory, and to communicate, in a natural and effectual manner, those good affections to others, which you feel in your own breast.—Not to mention the labours to be gone through in visiting your friends, and in the exercise of that prudent personal and domestic inspection, which you must necessarily attend to, if you would approve yourself a skilful, yea, I will add, if you would approve yourself a faithful shepherd.—What a combination on the whole! Labours of the head, labours of the voice; but oh, above all, labours of the heart! For this is indeed the labour: To fix on our own inconstant spirits a becoming habitual sense of God; to feel always in our own breast those pious affections, which it is our business to endeavour to raise in others; in a word, to keep the sacred flame of love to God, to Christ, and to the souls of men, ever burning, yea ever glowing, with an intenseness of heat proportionable to the number and nature of those sacrifices, which are daily, which are hourly to be presented!——Help, Lord, or it will soon be extinguished! Feed it continually by thy celestial stream; or *Who is sufficient for these things* * *!*—You will surely say so, when you consider,

2. The difficulties attending your work, of which I am next to admonish you.

But here, as indeed under the former head, your own experience must already have done it in the most convincing man-

* 2 Cor. ii. 16.

ner. You find the ministry, a work that requires not only patient industry, but wise conduct and happy address. Difficulties meet us in the closet, even when our own minds are competently furnished with divine knowledge, so as to adjust the composition of our discourses, as that the understanding of our hearers may be enlightened, their conscience convinced, and their affections impressed; that the ignorant may be instructed, that the careless may be awakened, that the hypocrite may be detected, that the mourner may be comforted, the dejected revived, the backslider restored, the confirmed christian yet more established; in a word, that every one may have his *Portion of meat in due season* *, and every one, so far as may be, according to his own taste too; at least, that what we say, while it is intelligible to the meanest, may not be justly contemptible to the more refined, but that things and *Words* may be *sought out* so far as faithfulness will permit, *acceptable* to both †. And how hard is it, to unite all these views, especially amidst such a diversity of sentiments, as well as circumstances! And this, not only where those are in question, who have apparently *Made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience* ‡, and whom in some respects it might be infamy to please; but even where, among the best of men, different apprehensions of things, conscientiously received and retained, will lead one to disrelish what another most wishes to hear, and possibly in some instances, one to censure even because another applauds.

It may on all these accounts, and many others, be difficult to instruct, and it will be still more difficult to reprove. General hints given in public will by guilty consciences be interpreted as personal reflections, and perhaps aggravated into open abuse, and occasions of declared enmity: And private applications will be evaded, discouraged, and very probably resented. The corruptions of the heart will rise against the most friendly efforts of cure; and those wounds which most absolutely require a deep search, will be least patient even under the gentlest touch. Your solicitude to please God will, in many instances, displease men. Your heart will be grieved by many unsuccessful labours. And to close the melancholy scene, you will probably see some, of whom you had very agreeable hopes, falling away from all regard to serious religion; and perhaps may find yourself obliged, though with a reluctant heart, to bear your part, in separating some from your communion, whom you gathered into it with the greatest

* Luke xii. 42. † Eccl. xii. 10. ‡ 1 Tim. i. 19.

joy, and in whom you blessed yourself as the seals of your ministry.

These are difficulties, which may arise from within; and besides these, the prejudices of the world will lie strongly against you from without. Many eyes will be upon you, to observe your conduct. By some your slips will be magnified into crimes; and if you walk so cautiously, though who can promise himself that he shall, as to escape any just blame, malice will create occasions of censure, perhaps in some instances even from your solicitude to avoid it. Your zeal will be called bigotry, and your candor hypocrisy; your humility affectation; and your activity will be imputed, either to a high opinion of your own abilities, or to a vain desire of outshining others, or to a low pursuit of popularity from arrogant or interested principles. Such treatment have the best of men found; and such must you expect, unless Satan lose his influence over the world by much swifter degrees, than we have any warrant to hope that he will. But this naturally leads me to warn you,

3. Of the oppositions, which you may meet with in your ministry.

These may indeed, in different circumstances, be more or less extreme: But something of this kind is at all events to be expected; and it will be our wisdom to provide against the worst. *Gird up* therefore *the loins of your mind**. Remember, that you are *Putting on your harness* †; and God only knows, to what combats you may be called.

We have long enjoyed halcyon days, through the favour of providence, and the equity of our civil governors; to whom I hope, we are grateful for it, as we ought. But he that rules in the heavens can only say, how soon clouds may gather, and how soon tempests of thunder and lightning may burst upon us. Sometimes, you know, a storm arises on a sudden, and the deadness of the preceding calm increases both its terror and its strength. So sinful a people as we must confess ourselves to be, can never have reason to wonder, at any public and national calamity, which may break in upon us in a moment. But should circumstances more gradually change, You, Sir, and our younger brethren, may live to see an *Enemy in the sanctuary of the Lord*‡; may live to see our religious liberties trampled under foot, and with them undoubtedly our civil, for they are twins that will live and die together. You may perhaps be called to *resist unto blood*§, to glorify God in the flames,

* 1 Pet. i. 13. † 1 Kings xx. 11. ‡ Ps. lxxiv. 3. § Heb. xii. 4.

and to teach your flock christian courage and fidelity, not by words, but by martyrdom. Such things you may suffer, as a protestant, as a christian.

And more peaceful times have their trials too, though perhaps not equally severe. I do indeed hope, that mutual love is growing, among the various denominations of christians, and particularly between us, and our brethren of the establishment. And may the blessings of the God of peace rest on the men who cultivate it, on both sides!—But we cannot hope to see the time, when all shall be so moderate and so equitable, as not to think and judge with some severity of those, whose conscience obliges them, though in the modestest manner, to maintain different forms of worship and discipline, even where the great articles of faith are the same.—And a different judgment relating to the articles of faith may draw down yet severer censures and opposition, from those whose judgment in worship and discipline agrees ever so well.—And I must faithfully warn you, Sir, that if you go on to assert, as I hope you always will, those great doctrines of the gospel to which you have now borne a public testimony, I particularly mean the Deity and atonement of Christ, the ruin of our nature by the original apostacy, and our restoration by the agency of the blessed spirit; you are not to imagine, that any moderation of temper, or any other personal virtue, or all your zeal for the service of the common cause of christians, protestants, or dissenters, will atone for what some will imagine so great a crime; or shelter you from the affected contempt, and severe reproaches of some angry people, who amidst all their professions of the most unbounded charity will think yours an excepted case, or will rather chuse to be injurious to you than consistent with themselves.—But *It is* after all *a very small matter, to be judged of man's judgment: He that judgeth us is the Lord* *: And that is the most solemn thought of all, concerning which I am lastly to admonish you, even

4. The awful account, which you are shortly to give up to him, from whom you have received your ministry.

*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ* †: And if he account with the meanest of his servants, we may assure ourselves, he will do it with his stewards. And let us remember, that when the books are opened, it will not only be found upon record there, "that such a congregation was at such a time committed to this, or that minister;" but a particu-

* 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. † 2 Cor. v. 10.

lar register will in effect be produced of every soul consigned to our care: So many heads of families, together with such children, and such servants." And then our conduct will be reviewed, and examination made, "how far we have answered our trust." Should it be found, that we have neglected and abused it, the displeasure of our great Lord and master will rise in proportion to its importance, and to the opportunities we have had of doing good in it. Opportunities, which though we may not perhaps so thoroughly examine, as to conceive of their full extent, he most circumstantially knows. And surely, if it be then found, as it undoubtedly will, a fatal thing to have betrayed the bodies, or the estates of men, when committed to our care; much more will it be so, to have betrayed, and by betraying to have destroyed, so far as in us lay, immortal souls. This is a matter of such weight, that when we seriously think of it, and compare it with those criminal neglects, which conscience will charge even on the best of us, there is just reason for us with one voice to cry out, *Enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord; for in thy sight can* none of us *be justified* *. And when you, my brother, think of it, in such a moment as this you may find your heart ready to fail; and even may be tempted to draw back, and say, *Who shall stand to minister before this holy Lord God* †? *Lest he break forth upon us*, and we die ‡. But I would not leave you under the distress of such a view, and therefore conclude,

III. With a few hints addressed to you by way of encouragement, to animate you to go forth with courage and cheerfulness, notwithstanding these awful views which I have been giving you of your office.

And, through the goodness of our divine Master, I have many considerations of great importance to urge here. As,

1. That you have an unerring rule in the word of God, from whence your instructions, admonitions, and directions, are to be drawn.

You well know, that *Scripture was given* for this end, *that the man of God*, that is, the christian minister, *might be perfected, thoroughly furnished to every good work* §, various as the good works of his office are. The best of human writings have their defects, and their blemishes: But in this respect, as well as others, it is true, that *As for God, his way is perfect*, and *the word of the Lord is tried* ‖. When we read the most excellent moral and religious writings of the heathens, we find a great deal

* Psal. cxliii. 2. † 1 Sam. vi. 20. ‡ Exod. xix. 24. § 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. ‖ Psal. xviii. 30.

of error and superstition, which mingles compassion with our admiration. When we read the merely human writings of the most celebrated ancient and modern divines, there is much to exercise our caution, and our candor. As for any new theological hypothesis, we generally find, on a more accurate examination, the proofs of its falsehood, proportionable to the confidence with which it is advanced, and the importance to which it pretends. And where men write with the greatest caution and modesty, though such generally err the least, yet there is something defective, or something redundant; something unguarded, or something overstrained: So that, though they may be useful companions in our journey, we dare not commit ourselves to any one of them as our guide; and they often differ so much among themselves, as to encrease our perplexity, and indeed to give us painful apprehensions as to our safety, or theirs; did we not recollect, that various paths, after having divided a while, may so run into each other, as to lead to the same place, though some may be more direct than others. But of scripture it may be said, as of its great original, that in it *There is* perfect *light, and no darkness at all**. Oh how happy are you, that have in so small a bulk, the oracles of eternal truth, and particularly the volume of the New Testament, which may so easily be carried about with you, to entertain you abroad, as well as at home; to talk with you, *When you lie down, and when you rise up*†; to be the *Man of your counsel*‡ when you are preparing to instruct your flock in public, and more privately to guide and advise them in the most intricate circumstances! This is like the pillar of fire, to direct your way amidst the darkest night; and like the pillar of cloud, to refresh your soul amidst the most painful labours and most scorching heats. Let it be followed faithfully; and you, and that part of the Israel of God over which you preside, will be happily conducted, through all the windings, through all the fatigues of the wilderness, till your feet and theirs stand upon Mount Zion. Consult it, my dear brother, and reverence it as you ought; and you will be safe, not only under the shelter and guard of aged wisdom, but in every change that can be apprehended or imagined.

2. You have also for your encouragement the daily prayers of many, whom you have reason to think not destitute of an interest at the throne they address.

You have your share, I trust, in all the prayers, which are daily put up by the church, under its various forms, for

* 1 John i. 5. † Deut. vi. 7. ‡ Psal. cxix. 24.

all the faithful ministers of Christ: But you may assure yourself, that you are more particularly and distinctly remembered, by your christian friends to whom you are related in ministerial bonds. You need that remembrance; and they consider that you need it. In their families, in their closets, they see not a day, in which they do not supplicate earnestly for the blessing of God on your person, your studies, and your labours. When you come to them in the house of God, you may consider yourself, if you will pardon the expression, as raised on the wing of their prayers; and may hope to experience, in answer to them, some new unction from above. How great an encouragement, amidst the daily consciousness of our own unworthiness! whether we consider it, as testifying their love, and so securing in a great measure their candor to us; or as effectual to obtain those fresh supplies of divine assistance, which they have sought. Nor can I conclude this head without saying, that it is happy, when the minister, amidst all his various cares, is as constant, as earnest, and as affectionate, in praying for the whole people committed to his care, as many a pious, and it may be, obscure christian in each of our assemblies is, in striving with God for a blessing on his minister.

3. You may also expect the countenance, esteem and friendship, of all good men that thoroughly know you.

I put in this limitation, because the misrepresentations of character which ignorance and malice may draw, often alienate the minds of very deserving people from each other; so that they turn away with some distaste from they know not whom, or what. But where a valuable character is known, (and that of a faithful minister will always be such), it must command esteem and affection; and prejudices which had been conceived against it, will melt away before the radiancy of it, like snow before the sun. Be diligent and resolute in the execution of your office, and you will find favour, and good acceptance, in the eyes of God, and of worthy men; and perhaps, should your reputation be aspersed by the ignorant and the malicious, you may find that providence will exert itself to *Bring forth your righteousness as the light*, and your honour, as well as *your salvation, as a lamp that burneth**. You will be sure of a peculiar share in the affection and veneration of the flock over which you preside. They will look upon you, as the gift of God to the society: They will consider you, as, in some measure, the representative of our Lord Jesus Christ

* Is. lxii. 1.

himself; of whom every faithful minister is indeed a living image. They will therefore *Esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake* *. The maintenance they give you, will be cheerfully offered, in proportion to their respective abilities, as the tribute of gratitude, and the pledge of endearment. Your afflictions will be the common grief, and your prosperity their joy; and each of them will look upon himself as obliged in duty to approve himself, the guardian of your character, and of your peace. Their hearts, as well as their houses, will be open to you; their countenances will tell you, better than any words can do it, how welcome you are to them; and every proper token of respect will be cordial, in proportion to the degree in which it is unconstrained. And where this is the case, you will have no cause to envy any dignities or revenues, which mere power may command, but which no superior splendor and abundance can render equally sweet. Above all must it encourage you, to reflect,

4. That you have the promise of your master's presence, and may trust in him for the communication of his Spirit.

He hath told his ministers, *He will be with them always, even unto the end of the world* †: And you may rest on the veracity of a word, that shall continue, *though heaven and earth shall pass away* ‡. Christ will meet you; Christ will strengthen you. He will feed and cheer your soul; that you may be enabled to feed and to cheer those that he has committed to your care. It is not a mere empty sound: Your brethren, and your fathers, among whom you stand this day, can from their own experience attest the truth of the promise. He has softened our fatigues: He has sweetened our afflictions; and carried us with songs in our mouths through scenes, at the very distant prospect of which we should have trembled. *Having obtained help from Him, we continue* even *to this day* §, the living, the cheerful witnesses of his power, his goodness, and his faithfulness, *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus* ‖. And remember,

5. That in consequence of this, you may expect such considerable improvements in personal religion, as shall be a rich equivalent for all your labours, and for all you can resign for the ministry, or suffer in it.

It must be nourishing to the soul, if it be spiritually alive, to be so continually conversant with spiritual and divine things. Your meditations, your prayers, and your public discourses, your private converses on religious subjects and occasions, toge-

* 1 Thess. v. 13. † Mat. xxviii. 20. ‡ Luke xvi. 17. § Acts xxvi. 22. ‖ 2 Tim. ii. 1.

ther with the administration of both the sacraments, will all have a great tendency, under a divine blessing, to make good impressions on your own heart, and to advance you in a holy and devout temper. While you are thus daily *Watering others*, you *will be watered yourself**; as I doubt not but you will remember, that while you *Teach others*, you *teach yourself also*†. While the daily cares of others in their secular callings, have an apparent tendency to divert their minds from God, yours will tend directly to him, and give you advantages, beyond what can easily be imagined, for being *Continually with him*‡: Such advantages indeed, that, were the nature, and the value of them sufficiently known, men would be ready to contend for the ministry, as for a sacred prize. They would esteem it among the greatest privileges of a plentiful estate, that it might give them opportunities of being educated for it, and of being independent in it; while that independency was considered as some additional security for their fidelity. And the zeal, with which persons of the highest rank among us would then press forward to this work, would bring us into a necessity of directing into some other channel that provision, which the wise charity of some public benefactors, the living and the dead, has made for the support of poor students for the ministry: A charity, which in the low ebb to which religion is fallen amongst us, may almost, under God, be called the hope of our churches, even for the very next generation. Especially would the richest and greatest esteem it their honour and their happiness, did they consider what I am in the last place to mention to you, my dear brother, viz.

6. The glorious expectation and hope, which closes the whole prospect.

What if every other hope, but that of religious improvement, were in a moment to vanish? What if nothing should remain, between this and the grave, but the view of labours, of reproaches, of tribulations, of persecutions? What if you were to conflict, through the whole of your course, with the malice of enemies, the coldness and ingratitude of friends, the incorrigible obstinacy of sinners, the perverseness and imperfections of those, whom, if any are such, we must hope to be christians? Here is enough to balance all. Death is approaching: Death, that stripped Aaron of his garments and of his burdens together, and ended all his painful pilgrimage. *Be faithful unto death*, says our divine Master, *and I will give thee a crown of life*§.

* Prov. xi. 25. † Rom. ii. 21. ‡ Psal. lxxiii. 23. § Rev. ii. 10.

Oh think every day, of the extasy with which you shall receive that crown, and of the high everlasting exultation with which you shall wear it. Think of the joy, with which, after a life of persevering fidelity to him, your separate spirit shall ascend into his presence, e'er yet this body, the instrument of his service, shall be laid in the grave. Think of the congratulations, with which your venerable predecessors, your eminently pious parents, and those of your flock who have fled upwards before you, will then meet you, and hail your arrival. And think, how Jesus will, by one smile and embrace, overpay all the labours and sufferings of a long protracted life. Think of the complacency and delight, with which you will look down on the field which you have cultivated, and on the growing harvest you have left behind; while perhaps some of the blessed fruits of your labours may be running on from age to age, so as to be the means of propagating christianity to the last rounds of time. And Oh think, above all, of the *great day of the Lord, When the chief Shepherd shall appear*, that he may confer on *you*, and on all those who have faithfully discharged their ministry, *a crown of glory that fadeth not away* *. Then, when every christian of the lowest station and character shall receive his proper share of honour and reward, what may you expect, if you faithfully improve your ten talents; when those of your people whom you have converted or edified, appear with you as your *Joy and your crown in the presence of the Lord* †, and are honoured with the public applause and remunerations of the eternal and universal Judge in the face of the whole assembled world? All the pageantry of human greatness passes away like a dream; *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood* ‡: But human souls are durable and immortal; and they that have turned many of them to righteousness, shall have, in each, an everlasting ornament, and decked with a new lustre from each, *Shall shine as the stars for ever and ever* §.

May that God whom we serve, through the riches of his grace, give us all a portion in the triumph of that day! And may he add to all the joy, which the most unworthy of his servants is humbly bold to expect in it, that of seeing you, my dear brother, giving up an account of a faithful and happily successful ministry! To encourage and assist you in the discharge of which, may these plain hints conduce, through the blessing of him, who knows how, from the least and most inconsiderable seeds, to call up a rich and plentiful harvest! Amen.

* 1 Pet. v. 4. † 1 Thess. ii. 19. ‡ Acts ii. 20. § Dan. xii. 3.

# AN APPENDIX,

*Relating to the usual Methods of Ordination among the Protestant Dissenters.*

As in the beginning of the charge I have touched upon the decent solemnities attending the methods of ordination generally used among the protestant dissenters, it may not be improper to give a brief account of them; especially as I have been earnestly desired to do it, by a pious and learned clergyman of the established church; who apprehends, it may obviate some mistakes, and promote that mutual candor among christians of different denominations, which both of us concur to wish, and labour to promote. There is indeed a little variety in the usages of different places; but that which I have generally seen, does, I believe prevail in most of our churches, with the exception, and sometimes no more than the transposition, of a few circumstances.

It very rarely happens, that a minister among us is admitted to the pastoral office, till he hath spent some years, as a kind of candidate for it; and, so far as I can recollect, more undertake it after, than before their twenty-sixth year is completed. But as our theological students generally employ either four or five years in preparatory studies after they have quitted the grammar-schools, so they are examined by three or four elder ministers before they begin to preach*. A strict enquiry is made into their character, and into their furniture; both with respect to the learned languages, especially the sacred, and also as to the various parts of natural and moral philosophy; but above all, into their acquaintance with divinity; and some specimen of their abilities, for prayer and preaching, is generally expected.

An unordained minister is seldom chosen to the pastoral office in any of our churches, for in the members of each of these societies the whole right of election lies, till he has resided among them some months, or perhaps some years; preaching statedly to them, and performing most other ministerial offices, excepting the administration of the sacraments.

When the society, which generally proceeds with entire unanimity in this great affair, has received what it judges competent satisfaction, the several members of it join in giving him a solemn and express call to take upon him the pastoral inspection over them. And if he be disposed to accept it, he generally signifies that intention to neighbouring pastors; whose concurrence he desires in solemnly setting him apart to that office.

Previous to the assembly for this sacred purpose, his credentials and testimonials are produced, if it be required by any who are to be concerned; and satisfaction as to his principles is also given to those who are to carry on the public work, generally by his communicating to them the confession of his faith which he has drawn up; in which it is expected, that the great doctrines of christianity should be touched upon in a proper order, and

* See the dedication to my sermons on the Evil and Danger of neglecting Men's Souls, &c. §. 10.

his persuasion of them plainly and seriously expressed, in such words as he judges most convenient. And we generally think this a proper and happy medium, between the indolence of acquiescing in a general declaration of believing the christian religion, without declaring what it is apprehended to be, and the severity of demanding a subscription to any set of articles, where if an honest man, who believes all the rest, scruples any one article, phrase, or word, he is as effectually excluded, as if he rejected the whole.

The pastors, who are to bear their part in the public work, having been thus in their consciences satisfied, that the person offering himself to ordination is duly qualified for the christian ministry, and regularly called to the full exercise of it; they proceed, at the appointed time and place, to consecrate him to it, and to recommend him to the grace and blessing of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, by fasting and prayer, generally accompanied with the imposition of hands; and the public work of the day is usually, so far as I have been witness, carried on in the following order, or something very near it.

It commonly opens with a short prayer, and the reading some select portions of scripture which seem most proper to the occasion: Then a prayer is offered of greater length and compass than the former, in which most of our common concerns as christians are included; which is sometimes, though less frequently, succeeded by another of the same kind. Then follows a sermon, on some suitable subject, such as the institution, importance, difficulty, and excellency of the ministerial work, the character and conduct of the first ministers of the gospel, or the like.

After this introduction of a more general nature, another minister usually one of the eldest present, who is a kind of moderator for the day, gives the assembly a more particular account of the occasion of its being convened. The call of the church to the candidate is then recognized, either in word or writing, or by lifting up the hand; and his acceptance is also declared. He is then desired, for the satisfaction and edification of the assembly, to pronounce the confession of faith, which his brethren have already heard and approved; and pertinent questions are put to him, relating to the views and purposes with which he undertakes the solemn charge, that he may be brought under the most awful engagements to a suitable behaviour in it; and an express renunciation of the errors and superstitions of the Romish church generally makes a part of these answers, as well as a declaration of his resolution, by divine grace, never to forsake the ministry, whatever inconveniences and sufferings it may draw after it.

This being dispatched, the presiding minister comes down from the pulpit, and prays over the person to be set apart. There is no particular form of prayer on this occasion, or on any other among us; but I have observed, that the person who officiates is generally led in such a circumstance, to adore the divine wisdom and grace, in the constitution and revelation of the gospel, in the appointment of an evangelical ministry, and in supporting the succession of it throughout all ages of the christian church, as well as in vindicating it from popish corruption and bondage. Some notice is often taken of what may have seemed most remarkable in providence, with regard to the particular circumstances of the society then to be settled, and the person to be set apart to the ministerial office in it; who is then solemnly offered up to the service of God, and recommended to his blessing, in all the several parts of his work, which are distinctly enumerated. And this prayer seldom concludes without fervent intercession with God, for the christian church in general, and all its faithful ministers of every

denomination: And as those rising up to succeed in the work are often mentioned here, so I have had the pleasure frequently to hear the universities of our island, as well as more private seminaries of learned and pious education, affectionately recommended to the divine protection and favour on such occasions, with all the genuine appearances of a truly christian and catholic spirit. When that part of this prayer begins, which immediately relates to the person then to be consecrated to the service of the sanctuary, it is usual for the speaker to lay his hand on his head; and the other pastors conveniently within reach, frequently to the number of six, eight, or ten, lay on their hands also, at the same time: By which we do not pretend to convey any spiritual gifts, but only use it as a solemn, and expedient, though not absolutely necessary, designation of the person then to be set apart.

When this prayer is over, which often engages a very profound attention, and seems to make a very deep impression both on ministers and people, the charge is given to the newly ordained pastor, who generally receives it standing, as much as may be, in the sight of the whole assembly: And an exhortation to the people is sometimes joined with the charge, or sometimes follows it as a distinct service, unless, which is frequently the case, it is superseded by the sermon, or some other previous address. Another prayer follows; and singing having been intermingled, so as properly to diversify a service necessarily so long, the whole is concluded with a solemn benediction.

I know no method of proceeding on such occasions, more rational, edifying, and scriptural than this: And I hope, few, who believe any thing of christianity, can be so ignorant or abandoned, as to make light of such solemnities But however any of our fellow-servants may judge, I have a calm, steady, and joyful assurance, that transactions like these are registered in heaven with approbation, and receive the sanction and blessing of *the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.*

*Northampton, Sept. 18th,* 1745.

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# POSTSCRIPT.

As the want of psalms or hymns, peculiarly suitable to these occasions, has often been regretted on our ordination-days, when we have generally been confined to the 132d or 133d psalms, I was desired by several of my brethren to publish that which followed this charge; and I accordingly do it without any further apology. The reader will easily perceive, it is a kind of devout paraphrase on *Eph.* iv. 8. & seq. And it is one of some hundreds lying by me, on a variety of scripture-subjects.

# A HYMN.

I.

FATHER of mercies, in thine house,
Shine on our homage and our vows!
While with a grateful heart we share
These pledges of our Saviour's care.

II.

Blest Saviour! when to heaven he rose
In splendid triumph o'er his foes,
What royal gifts he scatter'd down!
How large, how permanent the boon!

III.

Hence sprung th' apostles honour'd name,
Sacred, beyond heroic fame:
Hence dictates the prophetic sage;
And hence the evangelic page.

IV.

In lowlier forms, to bless our eyes,
Pastors from hence and teachers rise;
Who, though with feebler rays they shine,
Still gild a long extended line.

V.

From Christ their varied gifts derive,
And fed by Christ their graces live:
While guarded by his potent hand,
'Midst all the rage of hell they stand.

VI.

So shall the bright succession run
Through the last courses of the sun;
While unborn churches by their care
Shall rise and flourish, fresh and fair.

VII.

Jesus our Lord their hearts shall know,
The spring whence all these blessings flow:
Pastors and people shout his praise
Through the long round of endless days!

# THE EVIL AND DANGER

OF

# NEGLECTING THE SOULS OF MEN,

PLAINLY AND SERIOUSLY REPRESENTED:

*A Sermon preached at a Meeting of Ministers, at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, October* 15, 1741.

TO

THE ASSOCIATED

## PROTESTANT DISSENTING MINISTERS,

IN THE

COUNTIES OF NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK,

*Particularly those with whom the Author had an Interview at Denton, June the 30th,* 1741.

GENTLEMEN,

*My Reverend Fathers and Brethren, and much esteemed Friends,*

THE condescending respect, and endeared affection, with which you were pleased to receive me, in my late visit to your parts, and the very great satisfaction which I found in your company at Denton, and elsewhere, have left a very delightful memorial on my heart, and have impressed those unfeigned sentiments of gratitude and esteem, which it would be painful to suppress. Most gladly therefore do I take this method, in a few words, publicly to avow them: and I sincerely congratulate the happy societies, respectively under your care, who statedly enjoy the benefit of those valuable labours, a little taste of which gave me an exquisite pleasure, beyond what it is possible for me fully to express.

Nevertheless, desirous as I am of erecting some little monument of thankful friendship, I should not have attempted it by inscribing this plain sermon to you; unless the subject of it had been such, as peculiarly suited your perusal; and, if I may be permitted to say it, amidst all its imperfections, your patronage too.

No doubt, many of you, gentlemen, remember, that after the public worship at Denton was over, on that memorable day, which I shall always number among the most delightful of my whole life, you were pleased, toward the evening, to indulge me in the liberty of a private conference, in which I laid before you some hints of a scheme, which I was then forming for the revival of religion in our parts; a scheme, which you were pleased, in the general, to approve, and, in several particulars, to ripen, by your prudent and valuable counsels.

Greatly encouraged by the sanction which your concurrence gave to the plan; and also by that which it received from the approbation of some of the most eminent of the London ministers, of different denominations, to whom I had an opportunity of communicating it on my return home; I proposed it in general to my reverend and worthy brethren in these parts, at a meeting of ministers; which was held here at Northampton, about the middle of August. The proposals were, in the general, very well received; and it was agreed to take them into a more particular consideration in a conference, at our next assembly, to be held at Kettering, on Thursday, the 15th of October.

To that conference, Gentlemen, the sermon with which I now present you, was introductory; and the result of it was, that the heads of the scheme I had concerted with you at Denton, with a few other particulars which had not then occurred to my thoughts, were unanimously approved; and we are taking proper measures for carrying them into execution. And, as this discourse may fall into the hands of some, who may be curious to know what the particulars were; and as I bore them so frequently in my thoughts, through many passages of my sermon, I shall take the freedom here to give an account of them, though, I doubt not, but the most material of them are fresh in your memories.

It seemed most agreeable to the deference due to the reverend assembly, to propose the scheme in the form of queries; on which the following resolutions were formed, nemine contradicente.

I. That it may tend to the advancement of religion, that the ministers of this association, if they have not very lately done it, should agree to preach one Lord's day on family religion, and another on secret prayer; and that the time should be fixed, in humble hope that concurrent labours, connected with concurrent petitions to the throne of grace, might produce some happy effect.

II. That it is proper, that pastoral visiting should be more solemnly attended to; and that greater care should be taken in personal inspection, than has generally been used. And that it may conduce to this good end, that each minister should take an exact survey of his flock, and note down the names of the heads of families, the children, the servants, and other single persons in his auditory, in order to keep proper memorandums concerning each; that he may judge the better of the particulars of his duty with regard to every one, and may observe how his visits, exhortations, and admonitions, correspond to their respective characters and circumstances.

III. That consequent on this survey, it will be proper as soon as possible, and henceforward at least once a year, to visit, if it be practicable, every head of a family under our ministerial care, with a solemn charge to attend to the business of religion, in their hearts, and houses, watching over their domestics in the fear of the Lord, we, at the same time, professing our readiness to give them all proper assistances for this purpose.

IV. That it will be highly expedient, immediately, or as soon as may be, to set up the work of catechising in one form or another, and to keep to it statedly for one half of the year at least: and that it is probable, future counsels may ripen some scheme for carrying on this work, in a manner which may tend greatly to the propagation of real, vital, catholic christianity, in the rising generation.

V. That there is reason to apprehend, there are, in all our congregations, some pious and valuable persons, who live in a culpable neglect of the Lord's supper; and that it is our duty, particularly to inform ourselves who

they are, and to endeavour, by our prayers to God, and our serious addresses to them, to introduce them into communion; to which, I question not, we shall all willingly add, cautiously guarding against any thing in the methods of admission, which may justly discourage sincere christians of a tender and timorous temper.

VI. That it is to be feared, there are some, in several of our communions at least, who behave in such a manner as to give just offence; and that we may be in great danger of making ourselves partakers of other men's sins, if we do not animadvert upon them: and that if they will not reform, or if the crime be notorious, we ought, in duty to God, and to them, and to all around us, solemnly to cut them off from our sacramental communion, as a reproach to the church of Christ.

VII. That it may, on many accounts, be proper to advise our people, to enter into little bands, or societies, for religious discourse and prayer; each consisting of six or eight, to meet for these good purposes once in a week, or a fortnight, as may best suit with their other engagements and affairs.

VIII. That it might be advisable, if it can be done, to select out of each congregation under our care, a small number of persons, remarkable for experienced prudence, seriousness, humility, and zeal, to act as a stated council for promoting religion in the said society: and that it would be proper, they should have some certain times of meeting, with each other, and with the minister, to join their counsels, and their prayers for the public good.

IX. That so far as we can judge, it might, by the divine blessing, conduce to the advancement of these valuable ends, that neighbouring ministers, in one part of our land and another, especially in this country, should enter into associations, to strengthen the hands of each other by united consultations and prayer: and that meetings of ministers might, by some obvious regulations, be made more extensively useful than they often are: in which view it was farther proposed, with unanimous approbation, that these meetings should be held at certain periodical times:——That each member of the association should endeavour, if possible, to be present, studying to order his affairs so, as to guard against unnecessary hindrances:——That public worship should begin and end sooner, than it commonly has done on these occasions:——That each pastor preach at these assemblies in his turn:——That the minister of the place determine who shall be employed in prayer:——That after a moderate repast, to be managed with as little trouble and expence as may be, an hour or two in the afternoon be spent in religious conference and prayer, and in taking into consideration, merely as a friendly council, and without the least pretence to any right of authoritative decision, the concerns of any brother, or any society, which may be brought before us for our advice:——And finally, that every member of this association shall consider it as an additional obligation upon him, to endeavour to be, so far as he justly and honourably can, a friend and guardian to the reputation, comfort, and usefulness of all his brethren in the christian ministry, near or remote, of whatever party and denomination.

X. That it may be proper to enter into some farther measures, to regulate the admission of young persons into the ministry.———The particulars here were referred to farther consideration: but, so far as I can judge, the plan proposed will be pretty nearly this:——That if any student, within the compass of this association, desires to be admitted as a preacher, he apply to the ministers at one of their periodical meetings; when, if they be in the gene-

ral satisfied, that he is a person of a fair character, in sacramental communion with a christian society, and one who has gone through a regular course of preparatory studies, they will appoint three of their number, to examine more particularly into his acquaintance with, and sense of the great doctrines of christianity, as delivered in the scripture, and into the progress he has made in literature, the views with which he professes to undertake the ministry, and in general, his aptness to teach: in order to judging of which, it may be proper, that a theological thesis be exhibited in latin, and a popular sermon, composed by the candidate, be submitted to the perusal of the examiners: that if they in their consciences believe, he is fit to be employed in the christian ministry, they give him a certificate of that approbation, which he may be desired to produce at the next general meeting, that his testimonials may be signed by all the associated ministers present, and he solemnly recommended to God by prayer.

Thus, gentlemen, you have a view of the scheme, as it now lies before us, and as every article, except the last, not yet considered among us, was approved at Kettering, at the time above-mentioned, I will take leave to add one particular more, which has since occurred to my thoughts, and which I here submit to your consideration, and to that of my other reverend brethren, into whose hands this may fall, especially those of our own association.

XI. Qu. Whether something might not be done, in most of our congregations, towards assisting in the propagation of christianity abroad, and spreading it in some of the darker parts of our own land? In pursuance of which it is further proposed, that we endeavour to engage as many pious people of our respective congregations as we can, to enter themselves into a society, in which the members may engage themselves to some peculiar cares, assemblies, and contributions, with a regard to this great end. I will not swell this dedication with the particulars of that scheme, which has been formed to this purpose; but rather chuse to insert at the bottom of the page a copy of such an association, which I am endeavouring to introduce among my own people, and which several have already signed. It is a feeble essay; and the effects of it in one congregation can be but very small: but if it were generally to be followed, who can tell what a harvest such a little grain might at length produce? May God multiply it a thousand-fold *.

Excuse me, my reverend and dear brethren, that I have detained you so long with these various particulars; and permit me to conclude this

* We whose names are subscribed, being moved, as we hope and trust, by a real concern for the propagation of the kingdom of Christ in the world, have determined to form ourselves into a society for that end, on the following terms:

I. That we purpose, as God shall enable us, to be daily putting up some earnest petitions to the throne of grace, for the advancement of the gospel in the world, and for the success of all the faithful servants of Christ, who are engaged in th e work of it, especially among the heathen nations.

II. That we will assemble, at least four times a year, in our place of public worship, at such seasons as shall by mutual consent be appointed, to spend some time in solemn prayer together on this important account: and we hereby engage, that we will, each of us, if we conveniently can, attend at such meetings; unless such circumstances happen, as to lead us in our own consciences to conclude, that it will be more acceptable in the sight of God, that we should be employed in some other business elsewhere.

III. We do hereby express our desire, that some time may be then spent, if God give an opportunity, in reviewing those promises of scripture, which relate to the establishment of our Redeemer's kingdom in the world; that our faith may be supported, and our prayers quickened, by the contemplation of them.

address, with beseeching you to join with me in humble prayer to him, who knows the sincere regard to the temporal and eternal happiness of his creatures, by which the plain things of this dedication and sermon are dictated, that he may honour both with his blessing. If any parts of the scheme here laid before you, have not indeed that subserviency to the great end proposed, which they are imagined to have, it would be a peculiar pleasure to me to be better informed: yet I must take the liberty to say, those must be strong arguments, which will prevail against the experience of the happy effects, which have for some time, in my own congregation, attended those, alas, too imperfect attempts, which I have made to carry them into execution. But if they are, as I assuredly believe, calculated to revive the languishing interest of real religion, may your advice, my honoured friends, in concurrence with that of my worthy brethren in these parts, and with the serious expostulations contained in the ensuing discourse, prevail on others to make the trial of them, which surely they will not repent in the nearest views of eternity.

I persuade myself, gentlemen, that in the midst of those various cares and labours for the public service, to which, weak as I am, divine providence has called me, you will sometimes be repeating for me those suitable and pathetic petitions, which you were pleased, at Denton, and elsewhere, during my late interviews with you, to offer on my account; petitions, which, I never recollect without a most sensible pleasure, and by the very remem-

IV. It is also our desire, that whatever important informations, relating to the progress of the gospel, be received from the various parts of this kingdom, or from foreign lands, by any members of the society, they may be communicated to us at our general quarterly meetings: and the rest of us make it our request to our minister, that he will, where he can with convenience do it, keep up such correspondences; that we may be more capable of judging, how far God answers our prayers, and those of his other servants, in this regard.

V. We further engage, that on these days of general meeting, every one of us will, as God shall be pleased to prosper us, contribute something, be it ever so little, towards the carrying on of this pious design; which shall be lodged in the hands of a treasurer, to be chosen at the first meeting, to be disposed of by him, and four other trustees, then also to be appointed, in such a manner as they shall judge most convenient, towards supporting the expence of sending missionaries abroad; printing bibles, or other useful books, in foreign languages; establishing schools for the instruction of the ignorant; and the like.

VI. That the pastor for the time being, if one of the society, be always one of those trustees; and that four more be annually nominated by the society, at the first meeting after new-year's day, with a power of chusing their treasurer out of their own number; and that the accounts of the former year be then laid before the society, or before a committee appointed to examine them.

VII. That members, after the first meeting be admitted by the consent of the majority of the society present, at some stated meeting; and that if any member think fit to withdraw, he signify that purpose to the society, or to one of the trustees.

VIII. That brief minutes be taken at every meeting, of the business dispatched, the persons admitted, the contributions made at it, &c.

To these rules we subscribe our hands, heartily praying, that God may quicken us, and many others by our means, to greater zeal in this, and in every good word and work; and that joining in spirit with all those, who in one place or another, are devoting their lives to the advancement of the gospel, we may another day partake of their joy.

brance of which I find myself animated to this very day. On my part, dear brethren, be assured of all the most affectionate good wishes, which sincere esteem, and grateful friendship can inspire. May that spirit of grace and supplication, the happy effects of which I so delightfully observed in those of you, on whom I had then an opportunity of attending, be in a still richer abundance poured forth upon you all! May you open your mouths boldly to declare the mysteries of God, as faithful witnesses to the truth and purity of his gospel, in the midst of a degenerate and back-sliding age! May you teach, not only publicly, but from house to house! May a truly primitive and scriptural discipline, which it is our privilege, that amidst all our discouragements we are able, not only to pray for, but to exercise, be impartially maintained! And in consequence of all this, may you have the pleasure to see your assemblies flourishing! May you feel your hearts daily cheered and animated, by the visible success of your labours! and may there be no contention among you, unless it be who shall exert himself with the most exemplary prudence, zeal, and love, in the prosecution of so good a work! May each of you, in the sphere which providence has assigned him, be a burning and a shining light! And may the lustre of your fervent and active piety awaken, if any of them slumber, our brethren of the established clergy, to guard against that growth of the dissenting interest, which must otherwise be the probable consequence of such measures! May they all emulate the most faithful and zealous among us, in the purity of their doctrine, in the seriousness and spirituality of their address, in the vigilance of their pastoral inspection, in their tender care to train up the rising generation for God, and above all, in the distinguished sanctity of their lives! This will unite our hearts in such mutual esteem and affection, that even while in different communions, we shall treat each other like brethren and friends, and fellow-labourers in the vineyard of Christ; far more endeared by our common love to our divine master, and the souls he has redeemed, than alienated by our different apprehensions, as to the particular mode by which that interest is to be promoted. The question between us will not then be, "How much may we lawfully impose?" and "how much may we lawfully dispute?" But on the one side, it will be enquired, "what may we wave?" and on the other, "what may we acquiesce in, from a principle of mutual tenderness and respect; without displeasing our common Lord, and injuring that great cause of original christianity, which he has appointed us to guard?" Thus may the flames of undissembled love purge away our dross, and cement us into one mass; where the union will be the closer, in proportion to the degree in which the metal is the nobler, and the more refined! And thus may it cause those fetters to fall off, under the weight and the streightness of which, however they may have been gilded over, the worthiest persons that wear them must secretly groan! We are praying and waiting for that happy day, which whenever it appears, will be the glorious earnest of the revival of the protestant, and of the christian cause. In the mean time, may each of us have a pleasing consciousness, that we are labouring to promote it; or at least that while we are waiting for the appearance of the great physician among us, we do not, by our own rashness, exasperate those distempers, which in his absence we cannot heal! A wish, and a care, in which, I am sure, you will concur with,

*Gentlemen,*
*Your most affectionate Brother,*
*and faithful and obliged Humble Servant,*
*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, Feb.* 1, 1741-2.

# SERMON IV.

Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.—*If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, behold, we knew it not: Doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

THE interviews of the ministers of Christ will always be pleasant, in proportion to the degree, in which they are animated by divine grace to think, and act, worthy of their honourable relation to him, and to each other. We in these parts have great reason for thankfulness, that we have so long known, by happy experience, *How good and how pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity* *. And it is with peculiar joy that I reflect, we are met this day, not only to express and cultivate our mutual affection; but also, by our united counsels, to strengthen each others hands in the work of our God, and to concert measures for the more effectual revival of religion, in the several places where providence has especially assigned it to our stated care. As *Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man* often *sharpens the countenance of his friend* †. Most gladly would I, this day, since I am called to address you on so solemn and important an occasion, contribute my utmost to whet your spirits and my own; and to awaken us all to that zeal for the service of our common master, which will render the various duties of our office abundantly delightful, and our reward in heaven proportionably great. Oh that what I have now to say might be *Like goads*, to penetrate all our minds, and *like nails*, securely *fastened* in our memories and our hearts, *given forth from the one* great *Shepherd* ‡! May all the instruments, with which he is furnishing us in our pastoral work, be wisely and faithfully employed; and may the master of assemblies this day be excited to use them, with greater skill, and diligence, in his service!

And as for you, my brethren, in more private stations of life, I persuade myself you will hear me patiently and candidly:

* Psal. cxxxiii. 1. † Prov. xxvii. 17. ‡ Eccles. xii. 11.

for though but little of my discourse will be immediately addressed to you, it is your cause I shall be pleading in the whole of it. You will, therefore, I hope, be often lifting up your hearts to God for the success of it; and will also be considering, what intimations of your own duty you may collect, from what I am to address to those of a more public character. For though the words of my text may, with peculiar propriety, be applied to the ministers of the gospel, they were at first spoken with a much more general view; nor is there one soul in the assembly who may not consider them as directed by God to him, as truly as if his own name were prefixed to them. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest*, or, as it might be rendered, *though thou mayest say* *, *Behold we knew it not: Doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth he not know it? And will not he render to every man according to his works?*

For the explication of which words, with all becoming deference to the superior judgment of some before whom I speak, I would offer these three plain and obvious remarks.

1. That the omission, which is here charged as so displeasing to God, though immediately referring to men's natural lives, must surely imply, that the neglect of their souls is much more criminal.

The text strongly implies, that we shall be exposed to guilt and condemnation before God, by *forbearing to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain.* This must directly refer to innocent persons, brought into visible and extreme danger by some oppressive enemy, either by the sudden assault of a private person, or by some unjust prosecution under forms of law; and may particularly extend to cases, where we have reason to believe, a capital sentence has been passed in consequence of false witness, detected before execution is done †: when cases of one sort or the other

* It is well known, that the particle כי often signifies *although*. Thus our translators very justly render it in several places: See Exod. xiii. 17. Josh. xvii. 18. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ezek. xi. 16. Heb. iii. 17. And if they had done so in several others, they would have expressed the sense and connection of the original much more plainly. Compare Gen. viii. 21. Psal. xiv. 6. xxv. 11. Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

† It was allowed among the Jews, that if any person could offer any thing in favour of a prisoner, after sentence was passed, he might be heard before execution was done: and therefore it was usual, as the Mischna shews, that when a man was led to execution, a cryer went before him and proclaimed, "This man is now going to be executed for such a crime, and such and such are witnesses against him; whoever knows him to be innocent, let him come forth, and make it appear." עליו. לכ מי שיודע לו זכות יבא וילמד Lib. de Ord. Damnorum, Tractat. de Synedris, cap. vi. §. 1. apud Surenhus. Tom. iv. page 233.

occur, we may consider Solomon as requiring, just as his father David had done, that we should by such interpositions, as suit the case in question, and that station in which providence has fixed us *Defend the poor and the fatherless*, or those who are oppressed, as orphans often are; that we should *do justice to the afflicted and the needy*; and should endeavour to *deliver the poor and the needy*, and to *rid them out of the hand of the wicked* *. And though this may expose us to popular clamours, we should adopt the heroic resolution of Job, not *Fearing a great multitude*, nor permitting *the reproach of families to terrify us*, so as to *keep silence, and not go out of the door* †. One would hope, such attacks as these seldom happened under the peaceful and equitable reign of Solomon: but as violence and fraud are in some degree the product of all climates and ages, he had, no doubt, in some instances observed them ‡; and had remarked a culpable negligence in those, who ought to have interposed to have delivered the victims from such an undeserved stroke; on which account, he judged it necessary to enter his solemn protest against an indolence and cowardice, so detrimental to society, and so offensive to God, the great guardian of it.

Now you will please to observe, that delivering persons reduced to such extreme danger in the circumstance I have described, would generally be an act of charity attended with great danger, or with great trouble. And if the neglect of that be, as you see it is, represented as highly criminal, it must be a much greater offence to suffer any to perish, for want of either food, shelter, or harbour, in circumstances where a person is able, by a little trouble, expence, or care, to preserve their lives. And we may argue, by a consequence yet stronger than this, that it must be a much more heinous crime than either, by any neglect of ours, to permit the ruin of men's souls, without endeavouring their recovery, when they are, as it were, drawn away to the extremest danger of eternal death, and are *ready to be slain* by the sword of divine justice. For if temporal life should

* Psal. lxxxii. 3, 4. † Job xxxi. 34.

‡ It appears by several hints in Solomon's writings, that the gay, expensive, and luxurious manner of living, which, though directly contrary to the genius of the Jewish religion, was introduced in his days, had its natural effect in producing frequent thefts, perjuries, robberies, and murders, and, which was worst of all, abominable corruption among magistrates, and great iniquity in judicial affairs. Compare Prov. i. 10—19. iii. 29. iv. 16, 17. vi. 12—14. xii. 5, 6. xvii. 15. xviii. 5. xxii. 7, 28. xxii. 22, 23. xxiii. 10, 11, 20, 21. xxiv. 15, 23. xxviii. 15, 17, 20, 21. xxix. 4, 19. Eccles. iii. 16, 17. iv. 1, 2. v. 8.

be thus tenderly regarded, and expence or danger should be cheerfully met in the defence of it, judge you, Sirs, as in the sight of God, how much more *Precious the redemption of the soul is, which will* soon *cease*, even *for ever* *.

Nay, I might go yet farther, and draw an inference, if it were necessary, from that humane and charitable precept of the jewish legislator †: *If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray thou shalt surely bring it back to him again: If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee, lying under his burden, wilt thou forbear*, or, as it might be rendered, *wouldst thou refrain, to help him?* or couldst thou be so cruel as to harbour a thought of it? No, *Thou shalt surely help with him*; i. e. thou shalt go, if it be necessary, and join thy strength with that of thine enemy, to raise the beast from the ground. Now if God not only regards the natural life of a man, but if he thus appears to care for oxen, and for asses, how much more must he require us to reduce wandering souls, and to do what we can to raise them, when pressed under the burden of sin, and in danger of being crushed into eternal misery?

2. The text seems to suppose, that men would be ready to excuse themselves for this neglect.

It is true indeed, that at the first sight of a miserable object, we naturally find a strong impulse to endeavour to relieve it. Our hearts do, as it were, spring in our bosoms, and urge us forward to exert ourselves on such an occasion; which seems to be intimated by that word, which we render *forbear*, which often signifies to *check*, *restrain*, and *hold back* a person from what he is eager on doing ‡. But the wise man intimates, there may be danger of suppressing these generous sallies of the soul on the first view of the object; of suffering our charity to cool, and then of searching out apologies for our inactivity. You may be ready to say, *Behold, we knew it not.* "I did not particularly see the danger; I did not however, apprehend it to be so extreme: or, I did not know the innocence of the person in danger; or if I did believe it, I knew not how to deliver him. I did not think the interposition of such a person as I, could be of any importance in such an affair. I was sorry to see innocence overborne, and weakness oppressed; but I was

* Psal. xlix. 8. † Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.

‡ It is in the original תחשוד, and the same word is used to express the restraint put on the passion of Abimelech for Sarah, Gen. xx. 6. on the revenge of David, when insulted by Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 34, 39. and on the martial fury of David's party, when pursuing the rebels under Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 16. Compare Job xvi. 6. Prov. xi. 26.

myself too weak to contend with the mightier oppressor; too poor, too ignorant, or too busy, to meddle in an affair, where those who were much my superiors were concerned, and had determined the case. I had no obligations to the person in danger; I had no concern with him, nor any thing to do to embarrass myself with his affairs."

If these excuses be just, it is well. God requires impossibilities from no man; nor does he expect, that persons should rashly throw themselves upon difficulties and dangers, when there is no such rational prospect of doing good, as may balance the hazard. Nevertheless the text supposes,

3. That these excuses might often be over-ruled, by an appeal to men's consciences as in the sight of God.

*Doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?* As if he should have said, "It is an easy thing to excuse omissions, so that a fellow-creature shall have nothing to reply; but whoever thou art that readest these words, I charge thee to remember, that *It is* comparatively *a very little matter to be judged of man's judgment; he that judgeth thee is the Lord*:* and *he pondereth the heart:* he weighs, in a most accurate balance, all its most secret sentiments. I therefore cut off all chicane and trifling debate at once, by placing thee in his presence, and laying open thy conscience there. Thou canst answer me: but canst thou answer the heart-searching God? Does not he, the great Father of Spirits, see, in every instance, how inferior spirits conduct themselves? Does he not precisely know the situation, in which thy heart was at the very moment in question? *Thou sayest, thou knewest it not:* but he is witness, whether thou indeed didst, or didst not know it. And he also sees all the opportunities and advantages, which thou hadst for knowing it; all the hints, which might have been traced out, to open a more explicit and particular knowledge; every glimpse which thou hadst, when thou wast, like the *priest*, when he spied at a distance the wounded traveller *Passing by on the other side* †, and perhaps affecting to look the contrary way."

Nor was it in vain, that the wise man renewed his expostulation in a different form. *He that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?* As if he had said, "consider God, as *keeping thine own soul;* as *Holding it in life*‡; as *Preserving thy spirit*

* 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. † Luke x. 31. ‡ Psal. lxvi. 9.

by his continued *visitation**; and then say, oh thou that neglectest the life of thy brother, whether he must not be highly displeased with that neglect? May he not reasonably expect, that while he, the Lord of heaven and earth, condescends to become thy guardian, thou shouldst learn of him, and be, according to thine ability, and in thy sphere, a guardian to the whole human race, and shouldst endeavour, in every instance, to ward off danger from the life, from the soul of thy brother!"

And that these thoughts may enter into the mind with all their weight, it is added once more, in this pointed form of interrogation, *Will not he render to every man according to his works?* "I appeal to thine own heart, is he not a being of infinite moral, as well as natural perfections, and will he not, as *The Judge of all the earth, do right* †? Would he not have remembered, and rewarded thy generous care for the preservation of the miserable creature in question? And, on the other hand, will he not reckon with thee for such a failure? Human laws, indeed, cannot punish such neglects; but the supreme legislator can, and will do it. Think of these things, and guard against such fatal negligence in every future instance: think of them, and humble thyself deeply before God, for every past instance, in which such guilt has been incurred."

You easily perceive, from this explication of my text, that as I hinted above, I might very properly make it the foundation of a discourse "on the care of souls in general," addressed to persons of all ranks and professions in life; especially to parents‡, and masters, and heads of families: and they will indeed have an evident share in what I am to say, and therefore I would bespeak their particular attention to it. But considering the occasion of our present assembly, and also considering how much of their fidelity, in the performance of their duty, will probably, under God, depend upon the exhortations, instructions, and assistances, they receive from us, I shall chiefly address these things to you, my reverend fathers and brethren in the ministry; and intreat your patient and candid attendance, while I speak to you with all possible plainness and seriousness, as in the name and presence of our common Master.

God is my witness, that I mean not to insinuate the least disrespectful thought with regard to any one of you. Indeed I have not the least temptation to it, for I can say, with equal integrity and pleasure, that I believe few of your profession

* Job x. 12. † Gen. xviii. 25.

‡ I have argued the matter at large with them in my Sermons on Education.

in the christian world, glorious as that profession is, and happy as it is in many that adorn it, are more constant, more upright, or more zealous, in the course of their public ministry. I repeat it with great cheerfulness, that I am inwardly persuaded, few of the servants of Christ are, or in any modern age have been, more faithfully solicitous to *declare* to their people *the whole counsel of God*; or to enforce their public exhortations, by the silent, but powerful eloquence of a blameless, a holy, an exemplary life. And of this, I assuredly believe, you have a testimony in the consciences of all around you, and even of multitudes who are not the stated attendants on your labours; and who perhaps, in such a case, are under some temptations to err on the severe, rather than on the candid extreme. So that in this respect, I could cheerfully say, would to God, that all your brethren in the christian ministry, throughout the nation, and the world, were even as you! Nevertheless, permit me to say it without offence, for I say it in the fear of God, and with the sincerest deference and friendship to you, I am afraid, the extensive and important obligations of the ministerial office are not generally considered, and remembered among us, as they ought. I apprehend, much more might be done for the honour of God, and the good of souls, than is commonly done, I will not say, by those careless and profane wretches, who undertake the tremendous charge merely for the sake of worldly emoluments; by those whom the plainness of prophetic language calls *Dumb dogs, that cannot bark*, and *greedy dogs, that can never have enough* *; but even by those, who in the main have a principle of true religion in their hearts; by those, who keep up the exercise of public worship in a regular and honourable manner, and appear not only irreproachable in their conversation, but, if considered as in private life, *bringing forth the fruits of righteousness*. The learned, the wise, the virtuous, the pious minister, is, I fear, often negligent of a considerable part of his trust and charge; and thereby fails, *to deliver*, as he might, *those that are drawn unto death*, and perhaps are just *ready to be slain*. To awaken our spirits therefore from that insensibility in this respect, into which they are so ready to fall, and so to improve the present opportunity, that *The man of God may be perfect* †, and *thoroughly furnished to every good work* which our office requires, I shall take the liberty,

I. Briefly to consider, what excuses we may be most ready to offer, for neglecting the souls of men.

* Is. lvi. 10, 11. † 2 Tim. iii. 17.

II. Seriously to represent the great evil of that neglect in the sight of God, notwithstanding all those excuses. After which,

III. I shall add a few hints by way of reflection, as the time may admit.

And if a consciousness of my own past neglects, and an ignorance of circumstances in the congregations of my brethren, lead me to suppose some deficiencies greater than they really are, and to give any cautions, which their diligence and zeal render unnecessary, with regard to some that hear me, they will, I hope, forgive me this involuntary wrong. I am far from the thought of charging any particular person, and ground most of the remarks I now present, on what is obvious in the temper of mankind, and on those infirmities of human nature, to which the best of men are obnoxious, however by divine grace they may be conquered in a few of the most eminent for fidelity and zeal.

I. I am to consider, what excuses we may be ready to make, for neglecting to do our utmost for the salvation of men's souls.

Now I imagine one of the first thoughts, which may present itself to our view upon such an occasion, may be this:

1. That we do something considerable for that purpose:

And particularly, that we take care for their instruction in public; reading the word of God to them, when they are assembled together in his house; explaining, and enforcing it, in our expositions and sermons; presenting prayers and praises to God, in their name; and, at proper seasons administering the sacraments, in such a manner as we judge most agreeable to the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so far indeed, it is well: and a most wise and gracious constitution of our blessed Redeemer it is, that such ordinances should be administered, on solemn stated days, and by men appropriated to that employment; in consequence of which, such knowledge is dispersed, as may be, and undoubtedly is, through the divine blessing, effectual for the salvation of many souls. So that ministers, cannot go through the external and public services of their function, without giving their hearers some great and valuable advantages, far beyond what the professors of any other religion can find in the rites of their various, and generally absurd, and superstitious worship. And I am not afraid to say, that this would make the christian ministry, even in the hands of ignorant, careless, and vicious men, a blessing to the nation where it is settled, so long as

reading the scriptures, and almost any kind of prayers, in an intelligible language, make a part of divine service in their assemblies. Much more then will it be so, in the hands of wise, sober, and religious men, though, through human frailty, they are much less zealous and active, than it were to be wished they were, or than they ought to be.

But while we are thus pleading our diligence and care in the administration of public ordinances, it will be kindness to ourselves, seriously to ask our own hearts, at least, how they are administered. It is, as I have elsewhere hinted, a very important trust, to have the management of men's religious hours committed to us; their seasons of social worship being, comparatively, so short, and so infinitely momentous. Methinks we do almost, as it were, put our own lives in our hand while we undertake it, and may justly tremble on the view of that awful account which we are to give for it.

I hope, Sirs, we have the testimony of our own consciences before God, that we do not, on these solemn occasions, content ourselves with cold essays on mere moral subjects, however acute, philosophical, or polite; nor make it our main business, in our sermons, to seek the ornament and elegance of words, the refinements of criticism, or the nice arrangement of various complex and abstruse argumentations. When we speak, in the name and presence of God, to immortal creatures on the borders of eternity, I hope we entertain our hearers with plain, serious, and lively discourses, on the most important doctrines of christianity, in their due connection, and their relation to each other, in such a manner, as we, on mature consideration, do verily believe may have the most effectual tendency to bring them to God through Christ, and to produce and promote in their hearts, through the divine blessing, the great work of regeneration and holiness. I hope and trust, that God is our witness, and that the people of our charge are witnesses, that not one of those that diligently attend on our ministry, though but for a few succeeding sabbaths, can fail to learn the way of salvation, as exhibited in the gospel; and that we speak of it, as those that are in earnest, and do from our very souls desire to answer the great ends of our ministry, in the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the eternal happiness of those invaluable souls whom he has committed to our care. Otherwise we may incur great and fatal guilt, though public worship be constantly and decently carried on, and though a reasonable proportion of time be employed in it, with numerous and attentive auditories; to whom

we may be *As the lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice* *, while in the ears of God, for want of that fervent charity which should dictate and animate all, we are but as *Sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal* †.

But granting, as I would willingly suppose, and as with relation to you, my brethren, I do firmly believe, all these reflections can be answered to satisfaction: here is indeed a part of your duty honourably performed, and an important part of it too. But is that part, though ever so important, to be substituted for the whole? The diligent inspection of our flock, pastoral visits, the observation of the religious state of families, personal exhortations, admonitions, and cautions, by word or letter, as prudence shall direct, the catechising children, the promoting religious associations among the younger and the elder people of our charge, and the strict and resolute exercise of discipline in the several churches over which we preside; are these no parts of our office? Will we say it with our dying breath, will we maintain it before the tribunal of Christ, that they did not belong to the christian ministry? And if not, will our care in other parts of it, be allowed as a sufficient excuse before him, for our total omission of these? We have preached, and prayed, and administered the sacraments. *These things we should* indeed *have done;* and when we had taken the care of congregations upon us, we could hardly avoid it; but surely our own consciences will now, or hereafter, tell us, that *we ought not to have left the others undone* ‡. But we may perhaps for a while elude the conviction, by pleading,

2. That the care of particular persons more properly belongs to others; and especially, to heads of families, who have more opportunities of being serviceable to those under their charge, and indeed have the most immediate concern in them.

It certainly does. But does it belong to them alone? Or if it did, do not *they* belong to us, and to our care? And is it not the part of every superior officer of a society to see to it, that the subaltern officers be careful and diligent in the discharge of their duty? And in this case, are we to take it for granted, that in our respective congregations heads of families are of course so? That they pray in their families; that they read the scriptures, and other good books there, especially on the evening of the Lord's day; that they catechise their children, and solemnly press upon them, and upon their servants, the serious care of practical religion? Are we roundly to conclude,

* Ezek. xxxiii. 32. † 1 Cor. xiii. 1. ‡ Mat. xxiii. 23.

without any farther enquiry, that all this is done; and done in so diligent, and so prudent a manner? And that there is no need of any particular exhortations, instructions, or admonitions from us? Would to God, there were any one congregation in the whole kingdom, of which this might reasonably be presumed to be the case! But if it were indeed so, would not our concurrence with these wise and pious heads of families, in so good, but so difficult a work, encourage and strengthen them to prosecute it with greater cheerfulness and vigour? Would it not quicken, both their cares, and their endeavours? And might it not, by the divine blessing, promote the success of them? Might it not gain on the minds of children and servants, to see that we did not think it beneath us, tenderly to care for their souls? And might not our tender and condescending regards to them in private, while it convinced them how well we meant them, render our public labours more acceptable and useful to them? Now we well know, that the children and servants of the present generation, are the hopes of the next; as they are probably those, that in their turns will be parents and governors of families; whose children and servants, when they arise, will one way or another feel the happy, or unhappy consequences, of our fidelity, or neglect? And when such affairs are in question, shall we allow ourselves to plead,

3. That we have so much other business, and such various engagements of a different kind, that we cannot possibly attend to these things.

But give me leave, my brethren, to observe, that the question here, is not, whether we can find out other agreeable ways of filling up our time? But whether those other ways are more important, and whether that different manner of employing it, be more acceptable in the sight of God, and will turn to a better account in that great day, when our conduct is to be finally reviewed by him? We must indeed have our seasons of recreation, and our seasons of study: but it will easily appear, that no regards to either of these will vindicate, or excuse our neglect of the private duties we owe to *Our flock, in giving diligence to know their state* *, and being careful to *Teach them* not only *publicly*, but *from house to house* †.

Recreation, to be sure, can afford no just apology for neglecting it; since to follow this employment prudently, might be made a kind of recreation from the labours of a sedentary and

* Prov. xxvii. 23. † Acts xx. 20.

studious life. A grave and severe recreation! you will perhaps say. Grave indeed I will acknowledge it to be; but not therefore to a serious mind less delightful. So much of those two noblest and sweetest exercises of the soul, devotion, and benevolence, would naturally mingle with these pious cares and tender addresses, as would renew the strength which had been exhausted in our studious hours, and the manly, shall I say, or rather the godlike joy it would administer, would quite discountenance that which we find in the gay indulgences of a humourous and facetious conversation; though I see no necessity of forbidding that, at proper intervals, so far as its cheerfulness is consistent with wisdom and religion. And I am sure, that if we can turn our seasons of recess from study to so profitable an account, as would be answered by the duties which you know I have now in view, it will be a most happy art, well becoming one, who is truly prudent, and would therefore husband his time to the best purposes for eternity; in which view it is evident, that the smallest fragments of it, like the dust of gold, or jewels, are too valuable to be lost.

The great proportion of time to be given to our studies, will, no doubt, be urged, as a yet more material excuse. But here it is obvious to reply, that a prudent care in the duties I am now recommending, is very consistent with our employing a great deal of time in study; and particularly, with our giving it, what I hope we shall always learn to value and redeem, our morning hours, to which some of the evening may also be added. And if these will not generally suffice, give me leave to ask, what are those important studies, that would thus ingross the whole of our time, excepting what is given to devotion, and to what is generally called recreation?

I have had some little taste of the pleasures of literature myself, and have some reason to hope, I shall not be suspected of any prejudice against it; nor am I at all inclined to pass those contemptuous censures on the various branches of it, in which ignorance and sloth are often, with strange stupidity, or with yet stranger assurance, seeking, and it may be finding, a refuge. But on such an occasion I must freely say, I fear many things, which employ a very large portion of our retired time, are studied rather as polite amusements to our own minds, than as things which seem to have any apparent subserviency to the glory of God, and the edification of our flock; and, consequently, I fear, they will stand as articles of abatement, if I may so express it, in our final account; and when they come to be *Made manifest*, will be found *works* that *shall be burnt*, as being no

better, in the divine esteem, than *wood, hay, and stubble* *, how beautifully soever they may have been varnished, or gilded over.

Let me here, in particular, address myself to my younger brethren, with a frankness which may be to them more excusable, while I urge them to a christian self-denial upon this head, where perhaps it may be, of all others, the most difficult. I do not apprehend persons of your approved character to be in danger of any other kind of luxury and intemperance; but there is, if you will permit me so to call it, a sort of refined intellectual luxury, with regard to which I am jealous over you, lest you should be seduced into it, or rather lest some of you be already insnared by its specious charms.

I would not, my young friends, be so severe and cruel, as to desire you should be confined from that high and elegant entertainment, which a person of genius and taste will find in the masterly writings of the ancient orators, historians, and poets; or in those polite and elegant pieces, which our own, and other modern languages, may afford; from which the wise man, and the christian, will learn many things of solid use, as well as matters of most delightful amusement. Neither would I pretend to forbid some mathematical and philosophical researches, into which you are initiated in your academical course, and with which you will do well to retain and improve your acquaintance in the progress of life, both to strengthen your rational faculties by that strenuous exercise, and to improve your knowledge of *The works of God*, which will appear *great*, wonderful and delightful, in proportion to the degree of sagacity and diligence with which they may be *searched out* †. But it is one thing to taste of these poignant and luscious fruits, and another to feed and live upon them:—One thing to make the most noble and substantial parts of them our entertainment and refreshment; and quite another to make their circumstantial curiosities the chief business of our study, and the favourite subjects of our most attentive enquiry. That true greatness and elevation of mind, which the gospel is so admirably calculated to produce, would teach us a much sublimer science: and if for the sake of these little things, we neglect to pray for those whom God hath committed to our care, to enquire into their religious state, to pursue them with suitable applications and addresses, the time will come when we shall assuredly own, that we dearly purchased the most refined pleasures they could possibly give us: not to

* 1 Cor. iii. 12, 15. † Psal. cxi. 2.

say, how much greater and nobler pleasure we even now resign, while our duty is neglected. Oh, my brethren, let us consider how fast we are, as it were, posting through this dying life which God has assigned us, in which we are to manage concerns of infinite moment; how fast we are passing on to the immediate presence of our Lord, to give up our account to him. You must judge for yourselves; but permit me to say, that for my own part, I would not for ten thousand worlds be that man, who when God shall ask him at last, how he has employed most of his time, while he continued a minister in his church, and had the care of souls, should be obliged to reply, "Lord, I have restored many corrupted passages in the ancient classics, and illustrated many which were before obscure; I have cleared up many intricacies in chronology, or geography; I have solved many perplexed cases in algebra; I have refined on astronomical calculations; and left behind me many sheets on these curious and difficult subjects, where the figures and characters are ranged with the greatest exactness and truth: and these are the employments, in which my life has been worn out, while preparations for the pulpit, or ministrations in it, did not demand mine immediate attendance." Oh, Sirs, as for the *Waters* which are drawn from *these springs*, how sweetly soever they may taste to a curious mind that thirsts for them, or to an ambitious mind which thirsts for the applause they sometimes procure, I fear, there is often reason to *pour them out before the Lord* *, with rivers of penitential tears, as the blood of souls which have been forgotten, while these trifles have been remembered and pursued†.

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17.

† Since these papers have been prepared for the press, I have happily met with the Rev. Mr. Leechman's excellent Sermon, on the Temper, Character, and Duty of a Minister of the Gospel, preached before the synod of Glasgow, and Air, April 7th, 1741; which, so far as I am capable of judging, on an attentive and repeated perusal, is one of the most masterly performances of the kind, which ever fell into my hands. I am an entire stranger to the author, but hope this sermon, extorted as I am told, from an excessive modesty, by the earnest importunity of his brethren, will meet with such just regard, as may encourage him to enrich our age and language with many other discourses, in the spirit and manner, which he has there so admirably described and exemplified. I am sure my reader will be pleased with the following specimen, which I could wish deeply transcribed on every heart, and especially on my own. "A just sense of the important relations we stand in to our respective flocks, and a genuine feeling of that tender affection which is due to them, won't it allow us to hesitate one moment, whether that part of our time is most worthily employed, which is taken up in doing real offices of friendship amongthem: or that part of it, which is spent in perusing the finest writings of the greatest genius that ever appeared in the world, or in polishing any little compositions of our own. Is the arranging of words, the beautifying of language, or even storing our own minds with the divinest sentiments, an employment of equal dignity and

Nor am I without my fears, that a great deal of studious time is lost, in an over-artful composition of sermons, and in giving them such polish and ornament, as does not conduce to their usefulness, nor any way balance the labour employed in the work. If we do not diligently watch over our hearts, this will be an incense, offered to our own vanity, which will render our sacrifice less acceptable to God, however we and our hearers may be delighted with the perfume. Greater plainness and simplicity of speech might often be more useful to the bulk of our auditory, and perhaps more acceptable too; and on the whole, it might be at least equally beautiful. For all that are not children in understanding know, that there is a natural and manly kind of eloquence, arising from a deep sense of the subject, and an ardent love to the souls of our hearers, which is, of all others, the most to be desired and esteemed. And though such discourses may be attended with some little inaccuracies, and may want something of the varnish which exacter preparation might set on; yet surely, where a habit of speaking is formed by proper application, and the materials of a sermon are well digested in the mind, it will rise above a reasonable contempt. And if where exacter preparation is made, a care to preserve those niceties of composition deaden the manner of the delivery, and take off either its solemnity, its vigour, or its tenderness, I cannot but apprehend it as injurious to the character of the orator, as to that of the christian. The most celebrated speakers in judicial courts, and in senates, have, in all nations and ages, pursued the method I now recommend; and the most acceptable preachers have successfully attempted it. On the whole, permit me to say, it would be a fatal thing, to barter away the souls of our people, for the highest and justest reputation of speaking well; yet I fear there are many, who in this view do it, *For nought, and have not* in any sense *increased their wealth by the price*†. But perhaps, after all, the most plausible excuse may be that, which I have reserved for the last I shall now mention, viz.

importance in itself, or equally pleasant on reflection, with that of composing differences, or extinguishing animosities, searching out modest and indigent merit and relieving it, comforting a melancholy heart, giving counsel to a perplexed mind, suspending pain by our sympathy and presence, though it were but for a moment, suggesting to an unfurnished mind proper materials for meditation in the time of distress, or laying hold of a favourable opportunity of conveying valuable instructions, and religious impressions, to a mind little susceptible of them on other occasions? There is no need of saying any thing in confirmation of this; it was the glorious character of Jesus, that *he went about doing good.*"

* Ps. xliv. 12.

4. That the attempts I am proposing might displease those that attend upon our ministry; upon which account it may seem, both with respect to them and ourselves, a necessary precaution of prudence to decline them.

This is the *Lion in the street**; which, slothful as we too naturally are, we often plead for staying within doors, when our duty calls us abroad on these charitable errands: But I hope, on a nearer approach it will not be found so fierce, or so invincible, as a timorous imagination paints it.

Methinks, brethren, we make a very unfavourable representation of the temper and character, not to say, of the breeding and understanding of our people, when we so readily take it for granted, they will be displeased with us, for addressing those exhortations to them in private, which they seem so desirous of receiving from us in public. Let us ask our own consciences, would they all be displeased? If not, the displeasure it might give to some, can be no excuse for neglecting it with regard to others. And are we indeed so miserable, as to be situated among whole congregations, in whom ignorance, pride, and profaneness prevail to such a degree, that a minister, who would be welcome among them, if he came only as a common visitant, should be looked upon with contempt or indignation, when he came expressly as a friend to their eternal interests, and would step a little out of the common way for their salvation? If this were really our case, who would not say with the prophet, *Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men*, though it were but such a wretched cave, as travellers find in a desart, *that I might leave my people, and go from them; for they be all an assembly of treacherous men* †!—*Of treacherous men* indeed, if while they call themselves christians and protestants, yea, and profess to separate from their brethren on religious principles, they should think themselves injured and affronted by the exhortations of their ministers, while they would *Warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that they might present them perfect in Christ* ‡. But blessed be God, bad as the world is, there is no room to imagine this to be the case, or any thing like it. Perhaps while we are delaying, and coldly deliberating about it, many lively christians under our care are earnestly praying, that God may put such a thing into our hearts: And should we attempt it, I doubt not, but they would *Receive us as an angel of God*, or *even as Christ himself* §; their love to us would be more abundantly

* Prov. xxvi. 13. † Jer. ix. 2. ‡ Col. i. 28. § Gal. iv. 14.

confirmed, and their hearts cemented in closer bonds than they have yet known. And many others would at least own, that we acted in character, and maintained a more apparent consistency of behaviour, if the affair were properly conducted.

Did we indeed pretend to control them in the management of their temporal affairs, or to exercise a lordly dominion over their faith and their conscience, they might justly be displeased: Or did we craftily demand, that they should lay open to us the secrets of their breasts in confession, their suspicions were pardonable, and their resentments reasonable. But it must be great malice or folly, to suspect any design of that infamous nature, from our visiting them as pastors, with pious exhortations, and affectionate prayers, as those who are concerned for them, and their children, and servants, that their *Souls may prosper and be in health* *. A solicitude for the health of their bodies is esteemed friendship and gratitude, and enquiries concerning it seem but common decency: And can it offend them, to find we are solicitous about that welfare, which is infinitely more important, and, by virtue of our office, our peculiar charge?

Yes, you will say, in one instance it will displease: For when we are obliged to blame any thing which we see amiss in them, their pride will naturally take fire on such an occasion; and perhaps those, whom we have thought our best friends, will *Become our enemies if we* will venture to *tell them* such disagreeable *truths* †, as fidelity may extort in some circumstances. This is, after all, the main difficulty; and as I cannot wonder if it impress our minds, I pray God to forgive the perverseness of those, that make it so great. Yet surely, it is possible to manage reproof so, as that, in most instances, it shall oblige, rather than provoke. If we tell our hearers of their faults privately; and if we do it with tenderness and respect: If we shew by our manner of speaking, that what we say proceeds from an humble fear, lest we should displease God, betray our trust, and injure their souls by the neglect: If at the same time our behaviour to them be, as it surely should be, constantly obliging: If we do our utmost, so far as truth and justice will permit, to guard and shelter their character in the world; and bring our complaints of them, to none but themselves: Bad as the world is, I believe few will quarrel with us upon this account; but we shall see, as Solomon observed, that *He who rebuketh a man, will afterwards find more favour, than he that flattereth with his tongue* ‡.

* 3 John ver. 2. † Gal. iv. 16. ‡ Prov. xxviii. 23.

But supposing the worst that can happen, that folly and wickedness should prevail so far, over all the tender and prudent address of the friend and the pastor, as to render us evil for so great a good, and hatred for so generous, and so self-denying an instance of love, how could that hatred be expressed? Seldom in any more formidable manner, than by withdrawing from our ministry, and discontinuing what they have done for our support; for the revilings of persons of such a character, can seldom hurt any but themselves. Now I hope, brethren, we shall always retain so much of a manly, not to say a christian spirit, as to chuse to retrench some of our expences, to forego some of the entertainments of life, to cast ourselves and families on providence, or even, if it were necessary, to subsist in an honest and creditable poverty, by the daily labour of our own hands; much rather than meanly to crouch to such haughty sinners, and sacrifice duty, honour, and conscience, to the arrogance of their petulant temper. Let us fear God as we ought, and we shall find nothing to fear from them; but should be willing to imitate the fidelity and courage of the Baptist, though the wrath of a king might be provoked by it, and imprisonment or martyrdom might be its reward.

I hope, such considerations as these may effectually obviate the excuses, which indolence or cowardice may be ready to form, for our neglect of men's souls; especially when we go on,

II. To consider the great evil of that neglect, as it appears in the sight of God, notwithstanding all these excuses, or any of the like kind, with which we may endeavour to palliate it.

But who can fully represent it, as it appears to his capacious and all-penetrating view? What human mind can conceive the infinite evil? It is not, Sirs, a subject, on which to display the wantonness of wit, or the colourings of artificial harangue: A terrible kind of solemnity attends it, and I attempt the display of it with fear and trembling. If it seems a light matter to us, to *forbear to deliver those that* in this sense *are drawn unto death, and them that are* thus *ready to perish*, consider, my brethren, and oh may my own conscience always consider,—what the death of the soul is;—how many wretched souls are continually dying around us?—what gracious provision God has made to prevent it;—and what peculiar obligations we are under, to labour to the utmost for the preservation of their lives.

1. Let us think, "what the death of the soul is."

The apostle James intimates, that it is a thought of great importance, when he says, *He that shall turn a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death* * : As if he had said, do but reflect what that is, and you will find your success is its own reward. We well know, that to *save a soul from death*, is not merely to prevent the extinction of its being, though even that were much ; but to prevent its positive, its lasting, its eternal misery. It is to prevent its being slain by the pointed and flaming sword of the divine justice.

It is a tragical spectacle, to behold a criminal dying by human laws, even where the methods of execution are gentle ; as, through the lenity of ours, they generally are amongst us : And I doubt not, but it would grieve us to the heart, to see any who had been under our ministerial care, in that deplorable circumstance. But oh, how much more deeply must it pierce our very souls, to see them led forth to that last dreadful execution, with those of whom Christ shall say, *As for these mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring them forth, and slay them before me* † ! Oh how will it wound us, to hear the beginning of those cries and wailings, which must never end ! How shall we endure the reflection, " These wretches are perishing for ever, in part because I would not take any pains to attempt their salvation !" And is this so strange a supposition, that some once under our ministry may then perish in our sight ? Would to God, that it were less probable ! But, on the contrary, let us

2. Consider, " how many souls, precious and immortal as they are, seem to be continually dying around us."

Are there but few, that miscarry ? Let Peter inform us, when he says, that the *Righteous scarcely are saved* ‡. Yea, let our Lord himself inform us, when he says, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it ;* whereas *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat* §. We grieve to see epidemical distempers prevailing around us ; we are ready, as providence calls us, to visit the sick and the dying ; and could take little pleasure in our own health, if we did not endeavour to succour them, as we have opportunity. But let us look round, and see, whether that distemper, which threatens the death of souls, be not epidemical indeed. With all the allowances, which that *charity* can make,

* Jam. v. 20. † Luke xix. 27. ‡ 1 Pet. iv. 18. § Mat. vii. 13, 14.

which *Believeth all things*, and *hopeth all things* *, which it can, with any shadow of reason, hope and believe; must we not own, there are marks of eternal death on many? And that there are many more, in whom we can see nothing which looks like a token of spiritual life? So that the best we can say of them is, that possibly there may be some latent sparks of it concealed in the heart, which as yet produce no effect to the honour of their profession, or the benefit of the world. In the mean time, sinners are spreading the infection of their infidelity, and their vices, far and wide; as if, like some illustrious wretches that have been miscalled heroes, they accounted the destruction of numbers their glory. Can we behold such a contagion spreading itself even in the christian church, which ought to be healthful as the regions of paradise, and not bitterly lament it before God? Or can we seriously lament it, and not endeavour its redress? Especially when we consider,

3. "What gracious provision God hath made to prevent their death."

*Is there not* indeed *Balm in Gilead? Is there not a physician there* †? Even this glorious gospel of the blessed God, whose efficacy we have so often heard of, and seen? And shall they yet perish? Adored be the riches of divine grace, we know, and it is infinitely the most important part of all our knowledge, that there is a rich and free pardon proclaimed, to all that will sue it out, and accept the benefit in a proper, that is, a grateful manner; for cordial acceptance, and real gratitude, is all it demands. One would expect, the tidings should be as life to the dead: But we see, how coldly they are received; how shamefully they are slighted; how generally, yea, how obstinately, they are rejected. And what is the consequence? Refusing to *Believe on the Son* of God, *they shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on them* ‡, with an additional weight of vengeance, as it well may. Now is not this enough to make our very hearts bleed, to think, that immortal souls should die under the gospel; yea, die under aggravated guilt and ruin? So that instead of being any thing the better for this delightful message of peace and grace, they should be for ever the worse for it; and have reason to wish, throughout all eternity, they had never seen the faces, nor heard the voices, of those that brought it, but had been numbered among the sinners of *Tyre and Sydon*, of *Sodom and Gomorrah* §.

If we do not, on the express authority of our Lord, believe

* 1 Cor. xiii. 7. † Jer. viii. 22. ‡ John iii. 36. § Mat. x. 15. xi. 22.

this to be the case with regard to impenitent sinners under the gospel, we are not christians of the lowest class. But if we do believe it, and are not affected with it, so far as to endeavour their recovery, I see not how any regard to our own temporal interest, or that of others, can entitle us to the character, either of prudence, or humanity; even though we had not been distinguished by a public office in the church, but had passed through life in the station of the obscurest among our hearers. But it is impossible I should do justice to my argument, if I do not urge,

4. The consideration of "the peculiar obligations we are under, to endeavour the preservation of souls, not only in virtue of our experience as christians, but of our office as ministers."

If we were only to consider our experiences, as we are christians, if we have any thing more than the empty name, that consideration might certainly afford us a very tender argument, to awaken our compassion to the souls of others. We know what it is ourselves, to be upon the brink of destruction, and in that sad circumstance to obtain mercy; and shall we not extend mercy to others? We have *looked to Jesus*, that we might live; and shall we not point him out to them? We have *tasted that the Lord is gracious;* and shall we not desire to communicate the same happy relish of his grace to all about us? He has magnified the riches of his pardoning love to us; and shall we not, with David, resolve, *We will* endeavour to *teach transgressors his ways*, and labour to promote the *conversion of sinners unto him* *? Even now is he keeping our souls: His *Visitation preserves our spirits* †; and, as it is *By his grace* that *we are what we are* ‡, it is by *Having obtained help from him*, that *we continue unto this day* §: And shall *his grace*, daily *bestowed upon us*, be *in vain* ‖? And shall not we have *Compassion on our fellow-servants, as our Lord* continually *hath pity on us* ¶?

But our office, as ministers, completes the obligation, when we consider the view in which the word of God represents that office, and the view in which we ourselves have received it.

As for the former of these, we are all acquainted with those representations, and it is greatly to be wished, for our own sake, and that of our people, they may be very familiar to our minds. Let us often listen with becoming attention to the blessed God as speaking to us, in those words which he once addressed

* Psal. li. 13. † Job x. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 10. § Acts xxvi. 22.
‖ 1 Cor. xv. 10. ¶ Mat. xviii. 33.

to the prophet Ezekiel, that faithful approved servant of the Lord; *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me: When I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his evil way to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but* HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THINE HAND *. And with apparent reason may the centinel be punished, for the desolation which the enemy makes, while instead of watching he sleeps.

We are elsewhere represented as *Men of God* †, as *Soldiers of Jesus Christ* ‡, as made *Overseers*, or *bishops, by the Holy Ghost* §, as under-shepherds in subordination to Christ, *The* great *Shepherd and Bishop of souls* ‖: And ought not the thought, gentle as it is, to awaken us to a diligent inspection over the sheep he has committed to our care? Otherwise, we are but images of shepherds; as it is represented in those lively and awful words of God by Zechariah, which methinks might strike terror and trembling into many, who in the eye of the world may seem the happiest of their brethren: *Woe to the idol shepherd, that leaveth the flock: The sword* of divine vengeance, which by his negligence he has justly incurred, *shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye;* upon that eye, which should have watched over the flock, and that arm, which should have been stretched out for its rescue; so that he shall be deprived of those capacities he abused, and be made miserable in proportion to that abuse; for *His arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened* ¶.

Such we know are the pathetic views, which the scripture gives us of our office, and of the guilt and danger attending the neglect.

I might, if my time would admit, farther urge the views, with which we have ourselves received it, and engaged in it. Most of us, when we undertook the pastoral charge, solemnly recorded our vows before God; "that we would endeavour, with all diligence and zeal, to attend to the services of this holy function; that we would be *Instant in season, and out of season* **, and labour to discharge the private, as well as public duties of the ministerial life." These vows of God are upon us; and every ordination of any of our brethren, at which we assist, adds a farther, and solemn obligation to them. Let us therefore

* Ezek. iii. 17, 18. † 1 Tim. vi. 11. ‡ 2 Tim. ii. 3. § Acts xx. 28.
‖ 1 Pet. ii. 25. ¶ Zech. xi. 17. ** 2 Tim. iv. 2.

take the greatest care, that we do not deal deceitfully, and unfaithfully, both with God, and man. For it is most evident, that though the neglect of immortal souls is very criminal in every rational creature, it is most of all so in us, who have so deliberately, and so publicly undertaken the charge of them.

It would indeed, in this case, not only be cruelty to them, but the basest treachery and ingratitude to our great Lord, who has lodged such a trust in our hands; a trust, which evidently lies so near his heart. Having *Redeemed* his people *with his own blood* *, he commits them to our care; and having acquired to himself the most tender claim to our love that can be imagined, he graciously requires this evidence of it, that we should *Feed his sheep*, yea, *his lambs* †; so putting our office in the most amiable and gentle view, and bringing in every sentiment of grateful friendship to excite our diligence in it.

However we may regard it, I doubt not, but our blessed Redeemer considers it, as the greatest favour, and honour, he could have conferred upon us; that being returned to his throne in the heavens, he should chuse us to negociate his cause and interest on earth, and should consign over to our immediate care that gospel he brought down from heaven, and those souls which he died to save; and that he should make it the delightful labour of our life, to follow him in his own profession and employment, to be of all our fellow-creatures, his most immediate representatives, and, in humble subordination to him, saviours of men. Does not the very mention of it cause our hearts to glow with a fervent desire, and generous ambition of answering so high a confidence? Could any one of us endure the thought of betraying it?

How could we, in that case, lift up our faces before him, when we shall, as we certainly must, *See him eye to eye*‡. Yes, my brethren, let us every hour recollect it; our *Master* will, e'er long, *come, and reckon with us* §: *He will render to every man according to his works*, as my text expresses it in exact harmony with the language of the New Testament ‖. And which of us would not then wish to appear before him, as those that have been faithfully attached to his cause, and have distinguished themselves by a zeal for his service? Shall we then, any of us, repent of our activity in so good a work? Shall we wish, that we had given more of our time to the pursuit of secular interest, or the curiosities of literature, and less to the immediate care of souls? Oh, my brethren, let us be wise in

* Acts xx. 28. † John xxi. 15, 16. ‡ Is. lii. 8. § Mat. xxv. 19. ‖ Rom. ii. 6. Rev. xxii. 12.

time. We have but one life to spend on earth; and that a very short one too: Let us make the best of it; and lay it out in such kind of employments, as we do verily believe will give us most satisfaction in the closing moments of it, and when eternity is opening upon us. It is easy to form plausible excuses for a different conduct: But our own hearts and consciences would answer us, if we would seriously ask them, what that course of life in the ministerial office is, which will then afford the most comfortable review, and through the riches of divine grace, the most pleasing prospect.—I should now proceed,

III. To the farther application of these things, in some practical inferences from them:

But what I have already said, has been so copious, and so practical, as not to leave room to pursue such inferences at large.

You have all, I doubt not, prevented me, in reflecting on the reason we have to humble ourselves deeply in the presence of the blessed God, while we *Remember our faults this day* * I do not, indeed, at all question, but that many of us have *Set before* our people, *Life and death* †; and have, in our public addresses, urged their return to God, by the various considerations of terror, and of love, which the thunders of mount Sinai, and the grace of mount Zion, have taught us. We have, on great occasions, visited them, and entered into some serious discourse with them; and have often, and I would hope, more or less, daily borne them on our hearts before God, in our seasons of devout retirement. Blessed be God, that in these instances, we have, in any degree, *approved ourselves faithful!* It must give us pleasure in the review. But, Oh, why have not our prayers been more frequently presented, and more importunately enforced? Why have we not been more serious and more pressing, in our private addresses to them, and more attentive in our contrivances, if I may so express it, to *Catch them* ‡ in the net of the gospel? Let us ask our own consciences, this day, as in the presence of God, if there be not reason to apprehend, that some, who were once our hearers, and it may be, our dear friends too, have perished through our neglect; and are gone to eternal destruction, for want of our more prudent, more affectionate, and more zealous care for their deliverance? In these instances, my brethren, though it is dreadful to say it, and to think it, yet it is most certain, that we have been, in part, accessary to their ruin; and have reason to say, with trembling hearts, and with weeping eyes, *Deliver us from blood-*

* Gen. xli. 9. † Deut. xxx. 15. ‡ Luke v. 10.

*guiltiness*,—from the blood of those unhappy souls, *Oh, God, thou God of our salvation* *! And we have need, with all possible earnestness, to renew our application to the blood and righteousness of a Redeemer; not daring to mention any services of our own, as matter of confidence in his presence; how highly soever others may have esteemed them, who candidly look on the little we do, and perhaps make more charitable excuses for our neglect, than we ourselves can dare to urge before God. Let the remembrance of these things be for a *lamentation*: And while they are so,

Let us seriously consider, what methods are to be taken, to prevent such things for the time to come.

They that have perished, have perished for ever, and are far beyond the reach of our labours, and our prayers. But multitudes to this day surround us, who stand exposed to the same danger, and on the very brink of the same ruin. And besides these dying sinners, who are the most compassionable objects, which the eye of man, or of God, beholds on this earth of ours; how many languishing christians demand our assistance? Or, if they do not expressly demand it, appear so much the more to need it? Let us look round, my brethren, I will not say, upon the nation in general, but on the churches under our immediate care; and say, whether the face of them is such, as becomes the societies of those, whom the Son of God has redeemed with his own blood; and of those, that call themselves the disciples, and members, of a once crucified, and now glorified Jesus? Is their whole temper and conduct formed upon the model of his gospel? Are they such, as we would desire to present them before the presence of his glory? *What is wanting, cannot be numbered;* and perhaps we may be ready, too rashly, to conclude, that *what is crooked, cannot be made straight* †. Nevertheless, let us remember, it is our duty to attempt it, as prudently, as immediately, and as resolutely as we can. Many admirable advices for that purpose our fathers and brethren have given us; particularly Dr. Watts, in the first part of his Humble Attempt for the Revival of Religion, and Mr. Some, in his sermon on the same subject: Excellent treatises, which reduced into practice would soon produce the noblest effects.

That those important instructions may be revived, and accommodated to present circumstances, with such additions, as those circumstances require, we are, this day, having united

* Ps. li. 14. † Ec. i. 15.

our prayers, to unite our counsels. I will not anticipate what I have to offer to your consideration in the more private conference, on which we are quickly to enter. To form proper measures will be comparatively easy : To carry them strenuously into execution, will be the great exercise of our wisdom and piety : May proportionable grace be given to animate us, and to dispose them that are committed to our care, to fall in with us in all our attempts, for the honour of God, and for their edification and comfort !

We shall esteem it, my friends, a very happy omen, if your hearts be with ours on this occasion ; and if you help forward so good, and so necessary a design, by your prayers to God for us. If you are sincere and affectionate in them, we may humbly hope, that he, of whom we ask wisdom, will graciously impart it to us ; and may assure ourselves, that you will not only bear with us in the plainest addresses to you, which fidelity may oblige us to make ; but will add all the weight of your countenance and interest, to support us in our applications to others, whether public or private. And I have a cheerful confidence, that all will not be in vain ; but that he, who thus powerfully awakens our minds, will so succeed our labours, that many, whom we find under a sentence of condemnation, and ready to perish by it, will receive the forgiveness of their sins ; will be recovered to a spiritual and divine life ; and, as the happy consequence of all, will at length be fixed with us, and with you, in the regions of everlasting security and glory. Amen.

# CHRISTIAN CANDOUR AND UNANIMITY

STATED, ILLUSTRATED AND URGED:

*A Sermon preached at a Meeting of Ministers at Creaton in Northamptonshire, January 12, 1749-50.*

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TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON;

THAT EMINENT EXAMPLE OF THE
CHRISTIAN CANDOUR
HERE RECOMMENDED,
AND OF EVERY OTHER VIRTUE AND GRACE,
WHICH CAN INSPIRE, SUPPORT, AND ADORN IT,
THE AUTHOR,
FINDING HIMSELF (AFTER REPEATED ATTEMPTS)
INCAPABLE OF WRITING ANY DEDICATION,
UNDER THE RESTRAINTS WHICH HER HUMILITY
AMIDST ITS UTMOST INDULGENCE
HAS PRESCRIBED HIM;
OR TO MENTION ANY EXCELLENCE WHICH WOULD NOT
SEEM AN ENCOMIUM ON HER;
HAS CHOSEN THUS MOST RESPECTFULLY
TO INSCRIBE THIS DISCOURSE:
INTREATING THAT HIS FARTHER SILENCE,
IN THIS CONNECTION,
MAY BE INTERPRETED BY HER LADYSHIP,
AND BY EVERY READER,
AS THE MOST SENSIBLE AND PAINFUL PROOF
HE CAN GIVE OF THE DEFERENCE,
VENERATION AND GRATEFUL AFFECTION
WITH WHICH HE IS, HER LADYSHIP'S
MOST OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

# SERMON V.

Phil. ii. 1, 2.—*If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies; fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind.*

IF it indeed be, as it certainly is, a test of true eloquence that it is suited to strike powerfully upon the minds of all, however different in genius, education or rank, I cannot but conclude that every one here present, must already acknowledge these words to be a remarkable specimen of it, even before we proceed particularly to illustrate them; and, having felt something of their pleasing energy while we have been reading them, is ready to confess that the sentiment they contain is finely conceived, and pathetically expressed. But ill shall we answer the great design of the apostle, if we rest in the mere acknowledgment of this. His views were much more worthy of him whose minister he was: He laboured to diffuse, through the breasts of his fellow-christians, that spirit of love, which was in his own, as a constant spring of living water. And what more convincing proof can be given of the deplorable disorder of men's minds, than that such addresses, proceeding from such a man; yea, I will add, the yet more forcible address of his divine Master, and ours, should have produced so little effect? That such discord and animosity should so early, so long, I had almost said so universally prevail in the christian church, amidst all the incentives, amidst all the intreaties, amidst all the tender adjurations, as well as the godlike examples which the sacred oracles exhibit to charm us into the most endeared affection. But alas these incentives, and intreaties, these adjurations, and examples, are overlooked, as not having lustre enough to detain our attention: For we too generally seem to study our bibles, if we study them at all, for amusement or ostentation, rather than practical instruction. We fix on some curious incident or high speculation, and are first ingenious to explain it where it cannot be explained, and then impassioned to defend it, as if it were fundamental truth, till we beat out the sacred gold so thin, that every breath of air carries it away: Whilst the plain things which tend to inspire an hea-

venly temper, and lead us on to the most exalted goodness, are slightly passed over; as too obvious, and too vulgar, to engage our attention or excite our emulation. Thus we feed our pride by what was intended to humble it, and make that the prize of mutual contention, which was designed to be the band of love.

What wise man has not observed this? What good man has not lamented it? Yet alas who so wise as in all instances to have avoided it? Who so good as to have exerted himself to the utmost to cure it? A cordial however feeble attempt of this kind will now be made, and so powerful are the arguments, so alluring the motives suggested in the text, that if the Spirit of wisdom and of love so often, and I trust so sincerely invoked, may guide our meditations upon them, we may cheerfully hope for some valuable effects.

And happy will it indeed be, if he may teach us to enter into these words, with a temper like that which the holy apostle St. Paul felt, when in his bonds for the sake of the gospel, and particularly for his zeal in asserting the calling and the liberty of the Gentiles to whom he wrote; he addressed them with this tender and pathetic intreaty. *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy; that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* It may be here proper to enquire,

I. To what the apostle is endeavouring to persuade the Philippians.

II. To consider in how tender a manner he addresses them, and what a variety of affecting arguments he pleads with them, and then

III. To conclude with some advices for maintaining and cultivating the temper he so pathetically recommends.

I attempt it, my reverend and dear brethren, with the greater cheerfulness, as from long experience I am persuaded, that all your hearts are one with mine, in every effort to spread christian love, and as that uninterrupted peace, and unalienated affection, which has so long reigned among ourselves will not only dispose you to receive what I shall say with unprejudiced minds; but will render it as agreeable to you, as it is in general needful to the christian world. Long have we beheld, and blessed be God, long have we felt, *How good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity* *; long has the

* Psal. cxxxiii. 1.

odour of this precious ointment filled our little tabernacles with its perfume. May the dew descend on all the mountains of Sion, and the Lord more abundantly command the blessing, even life for evermore! That life of which fervent christian love is the earnest, the foretaste, the beginning!

I. We are to enquire to what it is, that the apostle endeavours so affectionately to persuade the Philippians. And here I might observe, it is in the general to fulfil his joy, and more particularly to do it by cultivating unanimity and love.

1. He urges them in the general to *fulfil his joy*, that is, to conduct themselves in such a manner as might cause him greatly to rejoice. This was in the general to be done by remembering their christian character, and walking worthy of it, or as he expresses it in a few verses below, by *Working out their salvation with fear and trembling* *, and by keeping themselves *Blameless and harmless*, and acting as the *children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*, that so they might *shine as lights in the world, and hold forth* with advantage the *word of life* †. Paul, like the beloved disciple St. John, *Had no greater pleasure than to see his children walking in the truth*‡, and therefore elsewhere says, *We live, if ye stand fast in the Lord* §.

Now before we proceed to what is more peculiar to our subject, let us pause for a few moments on this edifying, this animating consideration. Let us as it were in our devout meditations, pay a visit to this illustrious confessor in his chains at Rome, for he was now a prisoner there, that we may learn how his mind was employed in the midst of his confinement, his straits, and his sorrows—To enquire what would have afforded him the most sensible joy, so far as others could be instruments of affording it? Not that his eloquence should be admired, or his necessities relieved, or his liberty restored, or his patience and magnanimity applauded, but that his christian converts might behave in character; that the honour of their profession, and their own happiness might be most effectually secured. *Only let your conversation be as becomes the gospel* ‖, and then *if bonds and imprisonments await me, Yea, if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all* ¶; and I call upon you also to congratulate me: *For none of these things move me, neither count I*, in a cause like this, *even my life dear unto me* **. But it is evident that whatever may be compre-

* Phil. ii. 12. † Phil. ii. 15. ‡ 3 John ver. 4. § 1 Thess. iii. 8.
‖ Phil. i. 27. ¶ Phil. ii. 17. ** Acts xx. 24.

hended in fulfilling the apostle's joy, the phrase has a peculiar reference to the method he prescribes, wherein they might effect it, which we are next to consider.

2. He urges them to do it, by cultivating unanimity and love.

As we render the second verse, this must be the sense of the whole: *Be like-minded, having the same love, of one accord, of one mind.* Admitting for the present this version, which I think may be considerably improved, common sense will not allow us to understand it as an exhortation, to be all entirely of the same opinion in every religious sentiment about which they might exercise their enquiries. For considering the diversity of men's capacities, and opportunities of improvement, that is absolutely impossible. Had Paul condescended to enter into the minutest detail of doctrines and principles that can be imagined, had his form of words been as artificial and elaborate, as that of any scholastic divine, and his decrees as large as those of the most voluminous councils, and synods of succeeding ages; yet still, while the apprehensions and understandings of men had continued of a different size, different interpretations might have been put upon his words, even by good and honest, much more by designing and prevaricating men; when interest on the one hand and resentment on the other, had given an edge to their invention. Least of all could such an unanimity as we are now speaking of, be effected by mere intreaties: And it is very observable, we here meet with no arguments or decisions, by which one doctrine is established rather than another, about which there could be any supposed difference, or one speculative sentiment or disputed practice pointed out, in which they are so earnestly exhorted to agree: Not now to insist upon it, that where there was such a perfect uniformity, a peaceful disposition would have been matter of very little praise, and might seem only self-love diversified and reflected.

We are necessitated therefore, by the absurdity of such an interpretation, especially in this connexion, to seek out for another: And we shall more easily attain it in its greatest perspicuity, by a little varying our version of the original words. Ινα το αυτο φρονητε την αυτην αγαπην εχοντες, *that ye may be unanimous, maintaining the same love* συμψυχοι το εν φρονουντες, *having your souls joined together in attending to the one thing.* On this interpretation, it will be as if he had said "be unanimous in affection, if you cannot be so in opinion, agree on cultivating the same love, however your judgments, yea, and in some instance, your practices may be divided. And that you may be so cemented,

let all the ardor of your souls be combined in attending more and more to the one great thing, which ought to be the leading concern of every christian, the advancement of vital, practical holiness:" This might well be understood, though it was not particularly expressed and described, it being so obvious to all that knew any thing of the gospel, that it was the great design in which it centered; and having been spoken of by our Lord, in a very celebrated oracle, under the title of the *One thing needful**.

And in this view we may consider the apostle as addressing himself, not only to his friends at Philippi, but to all christians of every nation and age: And thus supported by his authority, I may address you, my brethren, that hear me this day, whether in the ministry or in private life.

To agree in our sentiments as to every point of doctrine or discipline, or as to the authority, or expediency of every rite of worship that may be in question, is absolutely impossible. The best of men differ, their understandings differ, various associations have been accidentally formed, and different principles have been innocently, and perhaps devoutly admitted, which, even in a course of just and sensible reasoning, must necessarily lead to different conclusions. Accordingly we find that in this age, enlightened as it is, and so far as the age of literature can go, I am persuaded no age was ever more enlightened, the wisest and the best of men at home and abroad have pleaded the cause on either side of various questions, which to both have seemed important, without being able to produce conviction. The event of many a voluminous controversy has been this; that men of contrary parties have sat down more attached to their own opinions than they were at the beginning, and much more estranged in their affections: The champions something sore with the rough usage they have mutually received in the combat, and the partisans of each so heinously displeased at the obstinacy of their brethren, in refusing to yield to such unanswerable arguments, that they can hardly now condescend to own them for brethren. And when this is the case, what is farther to be done? The laws of human nature, the laws of Christ, will not permit of force on either side; and blessed be God the laws of our country forbid it too, which if they did not, I much fear that neither the voice of nature or scripture would be heard by many. Since then after all that has been said, or that can be said, we must live together, let us, by every consideration of prudence

* Luke x. 42.

and of tenderness, be entreated to live not only in peace but in love, in a free intercourse of all the good offices in our power, as well as with a strict care not to injure and afflict each other by unkind treatment, or censures unnecessarily harsh. Truth is indeed too sacred a thing ever to be denied on any consideration: and so far as we are in our own consciences persuaded that any particular truth is important, neither honour nor charity will allow us to give it up, as a point of mere indifferent speculation. Let us therefore ever be ready, when properly called out to the service, to plead its cause in the name of the God of truth; but let it be in a manner worthy of him, a manner which may not offend him as the God of love. And let us be greatly upon our guard that we do not condemn our brethren, as having forfeited all title to the name of christians, because their creeds or confessions of faith do not come up to the standard of our own. Yea if it were in a matter which seemed of so great importance as to give us some room to suspect that the mistake were fatal, (which surely nothing can be that does not greatly affect men's temper and conduct towards God, and each other) even that consideration should engage us to gentleness and tenderness, rather than severity to them; if peradventure our friendly and respectful carriage may gain such a happy ascendant over their minds, as to remove their prejudices against our reasons: For the reasons in such important matters must surely be so forcible that nothing but very strong prejudices could obstruct their efficacy; prejudices too, which on our own principles, we may endanger their souls by encreasing.

But where we and our brethren agree in attending to the *one thing* which christianity was designed to teach us; surely an agreement in that should unite our minds, more than any difference, consistent with that agreement, should divide them. To reverence with filial duty and love, the God of heaven, and to adore him with integrity of heart; to honour Jesus his son, as his brightest image, subscribing to the truth of all he is known to have revealed, and the authority of all he is apprehended to command; conscientiously to abstain from every known evil, and to practise, so far as human infirmity will permit, the comprehensive precepts of *living soberly, righteously, and godly; still looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*, assuredly expecting a future judgment, and an eternal world, carefully endeavouring to prepare for both, by setting the affections on those great objects, which the gospel opens to our view; and finally being habitually ready to sacrifice life and all its enjoyments, to that blessed hope;——this, this, my

brethren, is the essential character of every christian, and where we see this, should we esteem it a difficult thing to live peaceably with him in whom we discern it? Should we arrogate it to ourselves as any high praise, that we do not censure, that we do not grieve, that we do not injure him, because he follows not us? Is this the man to be hated or suspected, I will add, can we refuse to esteem and embrace him, merely because he worships in another assembly, or according to a different form, because he expresses his apprehensions about some of these doctrines in different words, because he cannot see all that we think we discern in some passages of scripture, or because he imagines he sees something which we discern not? Is it after all so great a matter, to love a character, which, amidst all its imperfections, is in the general so justly amiable? Nay, instead of thinking much of any acts of kindness, which it is in our power to perform for such a fellow-disciple, ought we not rather to lament that we can do no more for his service? Ought we not to endeavour rather to supply in our fervent prayers to God the lack of that further service, which christian benevolence dictates, but which the narrow limits of our condition and our nature will not allow us to perform?

Methinks the matter might safely be rested here, and that the very description of christian charity, and its proper objects, might engage every heart to cultivate it. Nor is it easy to expatiate beyond the just boundary of such an argument. But I should be inexcusable, if while I have this text before me, I should deprive you of the pleasure which every benevolent mind must undoubtedly feel, in contemplating, what we are to consider,

II. In how tender a manner the apostle addresses himself to these christians, and conjures them to cultivate the temper he had been recommending. And no words but his own will so properly represent this. He pleads *the consolation of Christ, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the spirit, the bowels of mercy.* Considerations, which if I can but illustrate, there will be little occasion to enforce them by any arguments of my own.

1. He pleads with them the *consolation of Christ.*

This most strongly implies, that many important consolations arise from him, and that they will all, if properly regarded, conspire in disposing us to mutual love.

That numberless consolations do indeed flow to the true believer from the Lord Jesus Christ, is too obvious to need being proved at large. Yet, O how delightful would it be to attempt a little to illustrate the point if my time would per-

mit! How delightful to speak of the genuine and strong consolation to be derived from the offices he bears—from the benefits he imparts—and from the figures under which he is represented in scripture!

How delightful would it be to me to speak, and to you to hear of this faithful and infallible prophet, who brings us so complete a revelation of the divine will, in so plain and so condescending a manner! Of this great *High-priest, holy, harmless, undefiled* *, who made his own life our sacrifice, who is now, in virtue of it, interceding in our favour before the throne of God, and lives for ever to attend this friendly important office! Of our most gracious Sovereign, who rules with consummate wisdom and proportionable goodness; and is ever ready to exert the power with which he is invested at the right-hand of God, to defend us from every evil, and to make us *More than conquerors* † over his enemies and our own! Of that kind surety who has undertaken our cause, and paid off our dreadful debt, that he might rescue us from that prison from whence there is no redemption! Of that compassionate Shepherd, who having generously *Given his life for the sheep* ‡, folds the weakest of the flock in his gracious arms, and *Carries the lambs in his bosom* §.

And where should I bound my discourse, if I were to speak of those consolations, which flow from the benefits that Christ bestows! From the pardon he proclaims, the complete pardon of the most aggravated sins! From the peace which he restores to our troubled consciences! From the cures he performs on the diseased powers of our natures! From the strength he diffuses through the infeebled soul! From the joys which his cheering spirit gives, and the delightful prospect which his gospel opens; which it opens not merely with respect to the happy spirit, when it has shaken off this burden of flesh and blood, and springs to its blessed associates in the intermediate state; but especially after the resurrection; when inhabiting a glorious, a spiritual, a vigorous, an incorruptible body *Fashioned after the model of the blessed Redeemer's* ‖, the complete man shall be for ever with the Lord!

These views, Sirs, will justify all the liveliest and most beautiful figures, under which so glorious and adorable a Saviour is described in scripture: As *the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the vallies*, as *the bread of life, that comes down from heaven;* as *the true vine;* as *the pearl of great price;*

* Heb. vii. 26. †Rom. viii. 37. ‡ John x. 11. § Is. xl. 11. ‖ Phil. iii. 21.

as *the cleansing fountain*; as *the shady rock*; as *the morning star*; as *the sun of righteousness*. Nay, must I not add, these views will teach us as it were to call for a new creation, to open upon us; to call for something fairer than roses and lilies, richer than pearls, sweeter than manna, more generous than the richest production of the vine, more refreshing than shades, or streams, yea brighter than stars, or the sun itself, to set forth the glory of Jesus, and describe the consolations which flow to our souls from him.

But you recollect to what purpose these consolations are here mentioned; that by them we might be entreated to mutual love. And, O how forcible is the conclusion! The consciousness of happiness sweetens and exalts the soul, it makes it capable of nobler and more generous sentiments, especially when happiness, like this of ours, is conferred on those that were once the children of misery; and conferred, not by merit, but by rich compassionate bounty, by overflowing grace and mercy. That must be a mean and stubborn soul indeed which is not melted with such goodness, and which is not full of a desire to impart what it has so freely received.

Especially may these consolations operate here, when we consider those who are recommended to our benevolent affections, as sharing in them with ourselves. Where, the full communication to all leaving no room for envy, the thoughts of being joint-proprietors must naturally be a source of love: For every one who is admitted to a share in these blessings, is honoured and adorned by them; is not only exhibited to us as the object of our Redeemer's love, which surely should greatly recommend him to ours, but is made lovely in consequence of it, and that with this further important and endearing circumstance, that he is destined by our glorious master to dwell with us and with him in a world of final and everlasting felicity. Let our souls enter into the attractive thought. However we now be divided; if we are indeed the members of Christ, one temple shall at length contain us, one anthem shall at length unite our voices, one object of supreme love for ever fill, and by filling, cement our hearts. Such consolations have we in Christ, such are the engagements in love which result from them! uniting to display what we are secondly to consider

2. The *Comforts of love*, which the apostle urges as a distinct argument. And certainly there is great comfort in it, comfort too great and too sweet to be displayed in one single branch of a discourse, and which I rather wish you may all learn by experience than by report, which at best must be very imperfect. But it is most obvious these comforts are powerful

and divine. Love not only guards the mind from the furious and diabolical passions of rage, envy, malice and revenge, which tear it like a whirlwind, which corrode it like a cancer, which consume it like rottenness in the bones, but fills it with a thousand gentle and pleasing sensations. Love distils a fragrant balm into the soul, that while it heals the wound which contrary passions have made, diffuses a most grateful and reviving perfume, most justly compared, in the passage I referred to above, to the *Ointment poured on Aaron's head*, or the refreshing *Dew descending on Hermon and Sion**, and making all the country between them to share in its copious blessings.

Who can enjoy himself even in the greatest plenty, while his heart is full of unkind passions to any, especially to his brethren? Who could rest in a palace amidst such disturbers, far more intolerable than the swarms of flies that invested Pharoah's gilded roof, or the *Frogs that came up to the very chambers of the king*†? But a benevolent and generous heart will make the plainest accommodations delightful, and as Solomon, who was so exquisitely acquainted with human nature, testifies, will render *A dinner of herbs where love is, better than a stalled ox and hatred* rancour and malice *with it*‡. Hatred has torment, more sensible than fear: Torment sufficient to turn heaven itself into hell, as it in a manner did, before those wretched spirits, who first entertained it, were, by God's righteous judgment driven out from thence. But love, joined with that fervent devotion which so well agrees with it, and indeed is inspired by it, will turn the meanest and most incommodious dwelling on earth into a paradise, yea into the delightful anticipations of heaven itself. And therefore has a gracious God, though his own felicity is perfectly independent on the greatest height of our love, or the most total deficiency of it, required us to love himself, and to love one another, that we might continually feel the noblest pleasure, a pleasure like that which he feels in the consciousness of his own most perfect goodness, and in the survey of his creatures as made happy by it: And I hope I offend not in adding, a pleasure which, as our natures are constituted, omnipotence itself could not communicate to us in any other vehicle but that of love. But we must not forget the third topic of argument which the apostle pleads,

3. The fellowship of the Spirit. Now it is implied as the foundation of this argument, that all christians do indeed

* Ps. cxxxiii. 2, 3. † Ex. viii. 24—3. ‡ Prov. xv. 17.

partake of one spirit. As the apostle expresses it, *By one spirit we are all baptized into one body, and have all been made to drink into one spirit* *; and this is pleaded as an endearing consideration, not only here, but elsewhere, *Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace—there is one spirit* †. And it is indeed so. Hereby we become *members one of another*, we are one body, as animated by one spirit. It is also the gift of Christ as our common Head, and given that it may adorn us, and by so adorning may unite us; as indeed what can render the soul more amiable than to be animated, to be impregnated with the spirit, whose fruits are so celestial and divine? Hear how the apostle, in whom it so eminently reigned represents its effects, the *Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance* ‡; and surely these fruits, fair as they appear when considered in themselves, must render those who possess them so much the more amiable, when considered as proceeding from this sacred principle: For thus they render the persons who possess them venerable; and we the more easily love where we greatly esteem. Does not the holy Spirit himself deign to descend and dwell in such souls, and there to plant these noble and glorious fruits, and shall I disdain them? Shall all the rich treasure that he has lodged there, go for nothing with me, because he has not added this or that circumstance? Because he has not taught them to judge exactly with me, and inclined them to worship with me? Surely to argue thus would be to grieve and affront this Spirit of Goodness. And let us not think to secure ourselves by saying they have it not. On men apparently sensual, cruel, and wicked, we may indeed pass this censure, whatever their religious profession may be: But where appearances are fair, we should be cautious of drawing such a conclusion; should rather be ready to suspect ourselves, and say, "have I indeed the Spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom, of candour, of love, when I thus *Judge my brethren*, when in *honour I prefer myself to them* §? When I say let me *Take the mote out of thine eye*, and *consider not the beam that is in mine own* ‖?" Let us not thus *Grieve the Holy Spirit of God*, if we desire to preserve any hope of *being sealed by it to the day of redemption* ¶. The sense and the force of this argument is apparent; though it may perhaps be a little difficult precisely to fix that of the next, to which we must now proceed,

* 1 Cor. xii. 13. † Eph. iv. 3, 4. ‡ Gal. v. 22, 23.
§ Rom. xiv. 10. xii. 10. ‖ Mat. vii. 3, 4. ¶ Eph. iv. 30.

4. He pleads the bowels of mercies: For bowels and mercies are not to be understood as signifying different things, but, by an usual hebraism, bowels of mercy, that is, the tenderest compassion, by which the bowels are struck and caused to yearn: And the general meaning to be sure is, if ye have learnt the compassion of christians. This implies, that it was intended that christians should be compassionate. If there are bowels in human nature, how much more tenderly must they move, when instructed by the holy discipline of the gospel? This the genius of our religion very evidently shows; as it gives us so many precepts of compassion, and as it gives us so bright an example of it, in him whose whole history is the history of compassion and love. And need I name him to you? O Sirs, from whom can we learn this lesson if not from Jesus the Son of God, whose pity, whose pity for us, for our otherwise hopeless ruin, brought him down from his exalted glory, clothed him in these mean garments of mortal flesh, which we wear, and when it had made him a man, made him a sacrifice too, and triumphed over all the agony, and all the infamy of the cross, that it might raise us to life and glory? O let us study this generous compassionate love in its various circumstances, till every stern and stubborn passion be subdued in our hearts, till we feel our souls melted into streams of love, and disposed to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ;* for *Greater love has no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend* *, and yet when *We were enemies Christ died for us* †.

But it is possible St. Paul might mean particularly to apply to their christian compassion for him, as if he had said; "If on the whole you pity the load of affliction under which I am lying for the gospel, and would not grieve me yet more than all my enemies can distress me; if you would rather comfort and support me under what I suffer from them, show it thus. Let Paul amidst all his labours and sorrows have this joy, that you love one another; that you are ready to every kind and friendly action, and shew a true christian magnanimity, as well as gentleness of mind, in looking higher than those things which are so often the causes of discord, to the great considerations which have so strong a tendency to unite us."

Such, my dear brethren, and friends, such are the arguments which St. Paul urges, and let us endeavour to retain a sense of them upon our hearts. Let me, as it were, adjure as many of you as hear me this day, by the consolations of Christ,

* John xv. 13. † Rom. v. 8.

if they are sweet to you, by his offices, by his benefits, by all the representations which the scripture makes of him, by the endearing tenderness and delight of this most noble godlike affection of the human mind, by the love of that holy Spirit which unites us into one body, and is, as it were, the common soul of it, by all the compassions which as christians you ought to feel for each other, and we the ministers of Christ would add, if that may avail any thing, as surely it may, by all your compassions to us, if we may indeed pretend to any merit with you, for all that we do, or for all that we resign upon your account, for all our most affectionate care for your edification, working frequently by night as well as by day, attending us into every place, and every service public or private; an affection which I hope, and I trust in the Lord, would bear us cheerfully to bonds and imprisonments, or to death itself for your establishment in our common faith. If any of these considerations, if all of them united can have any weight, *be unanimous, having your minds joined in the same love, and attending to the one thing; thus fulfil ye our joy*, which is herein the joy of our common Lord too, and which will be your joy, amidst the various inconveniences inseparable from mortal life. Cultivate more and more that lovely principle, which having ennobled as well as delighted your spirits, having rendered you the ornament of religion, and dear in the eyes of men, and of God, will prepare you for, and through the grace of the Redeemer, transmit you to the regions of everlasting love, and will there continue for ever to delight and adorn you, when faith and hope shall cease, and all our present causes of contention shall be long forgot. But I would hope you feel the force of these motives, and begin to be impatient for those advices for maintaining and promoting this blessed temper, which I gave you reason

III. To expect at the conclusion of this discourse. And here as I intend rather to suggest some useful and comprehensive hints, than to expatiate upon them, I shall not range them under distinct heads, but offer them briefly as they rose in my mind.

It will be one step towards attaining this excellent temper, "earnestly to desire to attain it." And that we may, let us often reflect with ourselves how amiable and how excellent it is! What an ornament, and indeed, with all its meekness, and tenderness, what a defence to true christianity! Let us accustom ourselves to think, so far as our best information reaches, what the face of the christian church has in fact been

amidst all the mutual animosities that have reigned among its members; and, on the other hand, let us try to imagine what it would have been, if that pacific, gentle, beneficent temper which the gospel recommends had constantly, had generally been prevalent, and every angry, turbulent, malignant thought and passion, had been brought into sweet subjection to the laws of Christ. But who can make the computation, whether we consider its aspect on present or on future happiness? Who can calculate how widely christianity would have been spread, while the admiring world had been charmed by so bright a light, had been melted by so celestial a flame? Who can imagine what delights had sprung up in every breast, and how they had been multiplied by reflection from each? Above all, who can conceive how large a colony the regions of perfect love and blessedness would have received from the peopled earth: A colony increased by how many thousands and millions of those, who, filled with rancour and hatred, are now alas! gone down to final destruction, and feel an hell of malignant passions within, which will be matter of everlasting torment to themselves, and all their wretched companions.

"Let us often think of the meekness and gentleness of Christ and of his apostles," particularly of St. Paul, and render familiar to our minds the many candid maxims, and principles, with which his writings abound. Let us remember, as he has admonished us, that *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost* *. That as for some particular ritual observances, though the imposition of them must indeed be displeasing to God, yet the practice or the omission does not affect our share in his favour, if conscience be not violated. *Neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse* †. Let us remember the very same principle, and that a very good one, indeed the very best of all principles, the desire of pleasing God, may, to persons under different apprehensions, produce a quite different conduct. *He that regards a day may regard it to the Lord, and as for him that regards not a day, it may be out of a conscientious regard to the Lord that he does not regard it* ‡. When we are tempted to make our own taste and relish the standard to which all our brethren should bow, let us remember that Christ pleased not himself; and, when we are ready on the one hand to *Judge our brethren*, or on the other hand to *despise them*, let us call up to our assistance that awful *tribunal* before which we are all in a

* Rom. xiv. 17. † 1 Cor. viii. 8. ‡ Rom. xiv. 6.

little time to *appear*§, that the account we have to give of ourselves to Christ may awe our spirits, and restrain us from that severity on our part, which might seem to challenge a severity on his, which the best of us could never be able to support under.

"If unkind thoughts against our brethren arise in our minds, let us suppress them," for by being vented they gain strength, and one injury is apt to beget another. If therefore we are obliged, as we sometimes may be, to plead the cause of truth and of liberty, though our antagonists may possibly give us great personal advantages against them, yet let us not be too ready to take or even to observe them, but let us rather shew a noble superiority to injurious usage, and learn to answer confidence and petulance, censoriousness and severity with calmness and gentleness, with reasonings indeed as strong as possible, but with a resolute guard upon our tempers; lest we become like those whom we blame, and condemn, in what is their folly, and will upon the whole be the disadvantage of their cause; for whatever little turn it may for the present serve, it will of course recoil upon them at last, and the more strongly when it seems to do it by its own natural spring, while we are too generous to urge it to the last extremity.

"Let those of us who appear under public characters, be very careful that we do not on any occasion passionately inveigh against our brethren, and especially in religious assemblies." Thus to abuse the sacred and important moments, which we spend immediately in the divine presence, thus to pervert the great design of christian ordinances, and make them the vehicle of such malignant passions, is equally affronting to God, and pernicious to men. It is calling the sheep of Christ together to be poisoned under a pretence of feeding them. Alas too inflammable are the passions of men in this degenerate state of nature, and too many are the unavoidable occasions of offence. It is not necessary that the ministers of Christ should abet their fury, and if I may be indulged in the expression, tear out some of the most important leaves of the book of God, to give fire to the fatal train.

It is always proper to be upon our guard here, and "it is never more necessary than when the petulance and bigotry of others has given the example and begun the attack." Nature will be roused on such provocation, and is ready to spring forward, and enter into the contention with a fierce delight: But

§ Rom. xiv. 10, 12.

it will be our surest wisdom in all such cases, to *Leave it off before it be meddled with**, remembering our relation to him who *Endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*†, and *Being reviled, reviled not again, but* in calm silence *committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*‡.

Permit me to add, that "in proportion to the degree in which God has distinguished any from their brethren by peculiar abilities, or more eminent services, they should be so much the more careful to distinguish themselves by meekness and candour." As James expresses it, *Whoso is a wise man, and endowed with* distinguishing *knowledge among you, let him especially illustrate his meekness of wisdom*§. The lowest understanding, the meanest education, the most contemptible abilities, may suffice to give hard names, and to pronounce severe censures. A harsh anathema may be learnt by heart, and furiously repeated by one that could scarce read it, and, as was in truth the case in some ancient councils, may be signed by those that cannot write their names. But true catholicism of temper is a more liberal thing, it proceeds from more enlarged views, it argues a superior greatness of mind, and a riper knowledge of men and things. And the man who is blessed with such advantages should be so much the more solicitous, that he does not on any provocation add the weight of his example to so bad a cause as that of uncharitableness always is. He owes it to God and to the world, that such an influence be employed to the happy purposes of healing the wounds of the christian church, and of conciliating the affections of good and worthy men towards each other, till their united counsels can regulate its disorders, and restore to it a form more worthy of itself.

"All these precautions will be more easy to us, in proportion to the degree in which we labour with our own hearts, to subdue the inward workings of pride and vain-glory." And for this purpose let us often review the too voluminous history of our own miscarriages in conduct, and mistakes in judgment; and it will make us less confident in ourselves, less severe and overbearing in our treatment or censures of others. On the other hand, let us look upon the excellencies of our brethren rather than their defects, and, let it always be the joy of our hearts to dwell in our thoughts upon what is beautiful, rather than what is exceptionable; and to trace, especially in those whose advantages for them may seem to have been inferior to our own,

*Prov. xvii. 14. †Heb. xii. 3. ‡1 Pet. ii. 23. §Jam. iii. 13.

the evidences of wisdom and humanity, of benevolence and piety. For this purpose, it is much to be desired that christians of different sects, while this diversity must subsist among us, should be ready as providence gives them opportunity to form acquaintance with each other, and also that their reading should not be confined merely to authors of their own sentiments, which often feeds bigotry, and shuts out candour at its first entrance. An enlarged acquaintance will infallibly convince us that all truth and goodness is not confined to one denomination of christians, nor among the patrons of any of those opinions, for which we have been inclined most eagerly to contend. Now when we are persuaded of another, that *God has received him*, we shall be more cautious how we presume either to *judge* or despise *him**, and when we see excellency in so many respects superior to our own, we shall not exalt ourselves highly on the advantage we enjoy in being, as we must indeed suppose we are, right, in that particular in which we are obliged to differ from persons we so highly esteem. Perhaps said one of the greatest and most excellent men our country has ever produced, I mean Mr. Howe: "Perhaps the reason why, in some disputable points, I have seen farther than some of my brethren, is, because their more elevated minds have been employed on greater and nobler objects, which has prevented their looking so minutely into these particular questions †."

By such means as these I hope something may be done towards mending the appearance of things among us, and reconciling the hearts of contending christians to each other, especially if we do not insist too rigorously on the history of former wrongs and injuries; for which we have all too much reason to blush, nor unwarrantably charge *the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.*

There is great reason to hope that the endeavour of every single person in his station to promote mutual union and love by methods like these, will in some degree be effectual; nor let us be discouraged, though it be not immediately successful to the full extent of our wishes.

It may too justly be said, with regard to the evils with which we are to contend, in such a case, that *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge* ‡. Too many have from their tenderest years been taught to place a part of

* Rom. xiv. 3.

† N. B. I well remember this to be the sentiment but not having marked the particular passage, I cannot be certain as to the words.

‡ Ezek. xviii. 2.

their religion in the severity with which they censure their brethren, and a peccant humour, so early wrought into the constitution, will not easily be subdued by the most sovereign medicines. That very reflection, however, should teach us "to take great heed that we do not convey unkind prejudices into the minds of the rising generation," but that youth be educated among us in more open and generous sentiments, that they be taught to reverence true christianity wheresoever they see it, and to judge of it by essentials rather than circumstantials. Let this be our care, and it is more than probable, that our children may rejoice in the shade and fruit of these trees of righteousness, which our hands have planted, and I hope it is not a vain presage that it will be so: For blessed be God the present season is mild and favourable to such an attempt, and I am persuaded none living have seen a crisis, which seemed more encouraging and inviting to these labours of love.

But here, as in every other respect, *Neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth: But God that giveth the increase* *. "Him therefore let us humbly and earnestly invoke, for the benign influences of his Holy Spirit;" whose great office it is to heal and sweeten, to purify and elevate the mind, and in every sense, to *take away the stony*, and to produce and cherish the tender *heart*. And O! may the God of the spirits of all flesh, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Author of peace and lover of concord, hear the prayers in which our hearts would unite with all our brethren; humbly interceding for the prosperity of the universal church: "That it may be so guided and governed by his good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith once delivered to the saints in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life, through Jesus Christ." Amen.

* 1 Cor. iii. 7.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

THE

## CARE OF THE SOUL

URGED AS THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

*A Sermon preached June 22, 1735.*

## ADVERTISEMENT.

As I would not willingly incur the censure of being over forward in publishing so plain a sermon on so common a subject, I beg leave to inform the reader of the occasion that determined me to do it.

The following discourse was first preached to a very numerous auditory at the funeral of a young person, who being seized on a sudden with a violent and mortal illness, which nevertheless did not destroy the exercise of her reason, was deeply impressed with a sense of her eternal interest, and expressed that sense in a manner which affected me as much as any thing of that nature which I had ever seen; not only recommending the text to me, but also charging this one thing needful on her brother and sisters in my hearing, with a solemnity and earnestness, which I hope neither they nor I shall ever forget. But I imputed the remarkable attention with which the sermon was heard, and the kind notice which was afterwards taken of it by many, to that awful circumstance, rather than to any thing in the discourse itself.

I had afterwards the honour to preach it, with some proper alterations, before some worthy and excellent persons of considerable rank and eminence in life, who are not ashamed publicly to own, that religion is their greatest concern. They were pleased to express such satisfaction in the seriousness and plainness with which this important subject was handled, that they urged me with an earnestness which I did not at all expect, to let them have some printed copies of it, that they might disperse them amongst their tenants and servants. I think too highly of these valuable friends to prefix their names to so inconsiderable a performance, which would do a great honour to a book, far superior to any I can ever hope to present them with. But as I am well assured of their continued candour towards me; so I hope the authority of their command, will be allowed as a sufficient apology for this publication.

We are so near the eternal state, and must so soon be silent in the dust, that methinks nothing which looks like a call of providence, directing to any opportunity of doing good to the souls of men, should be neglected. And if these obvious but weighty truths may, through the concurrence of divine grace, be made useful for the conversion of one of the lowest of those for whose service this discourse was asked and transcribed, I shall think this little labour abundantly repaid, even though many others should say, as they probably will, that I have made a little addition to the number of unnecessary books with which the world is already incumbered.

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*London, July* 29, 1735.

# SERMON I.

Luke x. 42. former Part.—*One Thing is Needful.*

IT was the amiable character of our blessed Redeemer, that he *Went about doing good* *. This great motive, which animated all his actions, brought him to the house of his friend Lazarus, at Bethany, and directed his behaviour there. Though it was a season of recess from public labour, our Lord brought the sentiments and the pious cares of a preacher of righteousness into the parlour of a friend; and there his doctrine *dropped as the rain, and distilled as the dew*, on the little happy circle that were then surrounding him. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, with great delight made one amongst them; she set herself down at the feet of Jesus, in the posture of an humble disciple; and we have a great deal of reason to believe, that Martha, his other sister, would gladly have been with her there; but domestic cares pressed hard upon her, and she was *cumbered with much serving*, being perhaps too solicitous to prepare a sumptuous entertainment for her heavenly master and the train that attended him. Happy are they that in a crowd of business do not lose something of the spirituality of their minds, and of the composure, and sweetness of their tempers? This good woman comes to our Lord with too impatient a complaint; insinuating some little reflection, not only on Mary, but on himself too, *Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me*†. Our Lord, willing to take all opportunities of suggesting useful thoughts, answers her in these words, of which the text is a part, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her*, q. d. Alas Martha, the concerns of the soul are of so much greater importance than those of the body, that I cannot blame your sister on this occasion: I rather recommend her to your imitation, and caution you, and

* Acts x. 38. † Luke x. 40.

all my other friends, to be much on your guard, that in the midst of your worldly cares, you do not lose the sight of that which so much better deserves your attention.

I shall consider these words, *One thing is needful*, as a kind of aphorism, or wise and weighty sentence, dropped from the mouth of our blessed Redeemer, and evidently worthy of our most serious regard. In handling them I shall,

I. Consider what we are to understand by the *one thing* here spoken of.

II. Shew you what is intended when it is represented as the one thing *needful.*

III. I will shew how justly it may be so represented, or prove that it is indeed the one thing needful.

IV. Conclude with some reflections and application.

My friends, the words which are now before us are, to this day, as true, as they were seventeen hundred years ago. Set your hearts to attend to them. Oh that you might, by divine grace, be awakened to hear them with a due regard, and might be so impressed with the plain and serious things which are now to be spoken, as you probably would, if I were speaking by your dying beds, and you had the full exercise of your reason, and the near and lively view of eternity!

I. I am briefly to consider what we are to understand by the *one thing needful.*

Now I answer in a few words, it is the care of the soul, opposed, as you see in the text, to the care, i. e. the excessive care of the body, for which Martha was gently admonished by our Lord. This is a general answer, and it comprehends a variety of important particulars, which is the business of our ministry often to open to you at large: The care of the soul implies a readiness to hear the words of Christ, to set ourselves with Mary at his feet, and to receive both the law and the gospel from his mouth. It supposes that we learn from this divine teacher the worth of our souls, their danger, and their remedy. That we become above all things solicitous about their eternal salvation. That heartily repenting of all our sins, and cordially believing the everlasting gospel, we receive the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness and life, resting our souls on the value of his atonement, and the efficacy of his grace. It imports the sincere dedication of ourselves to the service of God, and a faithful adherence to it, notwithstanding all the oppositions arising from inward corruptions, or outward temptations, and a resolute perseverance in the way of gospel dependance, till we receive the end of our faith in our complete salva-

tion. This is the *one thing needful*, represented indeed in various scriptures by various names. Sometimes it is called regeneration, or the new creature, because it is the blessed work of God's efficacious grace. Sometimes the fear of God, and sometimes his love, and the keeping his commandments; and very frequently in the New Testament is called faith, or receiving Christ, and believing on him, which therefore is represented as the great *Work of God* *; i. e. the great thing which God in his glorious gospel requires, as well as by his Spirit produces in us: Each of these, if rightly understood and explained, comprehends all that I have said on this head. On the whole, we may say, that, as the *Body is one, though it has many members*, and the soul is one, though it has many faculties; so, in the present case, this real, vital religion is *one thing*, one sacred principle of divine life, bringing us to attend to the care of our souls, as of our greatest treasure. It is *one thing*, notwithstanding all the variety of views in which it may be considered, and of characters under which it may be described. I proceed,

II. To consider what may be intended in the representation which is here made of it, as the one thing needful.

Now I think it naturally includes these three particulars: It is a matter of universal concern, of the highest importance, and of so comprehensive a nature that every thing which is truly worthy of our regard may be considered as included in it, or subservient to it. Let me a little illustrate each of these particulars, reserving the proof of what I now assert to the third general, where it will abundantly appear.

1. The care of the soul may be called the *one thing needful*, "as it is matter of universal concern."

Our Lord, you see, speaks of it as needful in the general. He says not for this or that particular person; or for those of such an age, station or circumstance in life, but needful for all. And indeed, when discoursing on such a subject, one might properly introduce it with those solemn words of the psalmist, *Give ear, all ye people, hear, all ye inhabitants of the earth, both high and low, rich and poor together* †. For it is the concern of all, from the king that sits upon the throne, to the servant that grindeth at the mill, or the beggar that lieth upon the dunghill. It is *needful* for us that are ministers, for our own salvation is concerned. And woe, insupportable woe will be to our souls, if we think it enough to recommend it to others, to

* John vi. 29. † Ps. xlix. 1, 2.

talk of it in a warm, or an awful manner, in public assemblies, or in our private converse ; while it does not penetrate our hearts as our own greatest care. Our case will then be like that of the Israelitish Lord in Samaria*, who was employed to distribute the corn when the siege was raised, seeing it with our eyes, and dispensing it with our hands, we shall ourselves die miserably, without tasting the blessings we impart. It is *needful* to all you that are our hearers, without the exception of one single person. It is *needful* to you that are rich, though it may on some accounts be peculiarly difficult for you ; even as difficult, comparatively speaking, as for a *Camel to go through the eye of a needle*†; yet if it be neglected, you are poor in the midst of all your wealth, and miserable in all your abundance ; and a wretch starving for hunger, in a magnificent palace and a rich dress, would be less the object of compassion than you. It is *needful* for you that are poor ; though you are distressed with so many anxious cares, *What you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and wherewithal you shall be clothed*‡. The nature that makes you capable of such anxieties as these, argues your much greater concern in the *Bread which endures to eternal life* §, than in that by which this mortal body must be supported. It is *needful* for you that are advanced in years, though your strength be impaired so that the *Grasshopper is a burden* ‖; though you have by your long continuance in sin rendered this great work so hard, that were it less important, one would in pity let you alone without reminding you of it : Yet late as it is, it must be done, or your hoary heads will be brought down to the grave with wrath, and sink under a curse aggravated by every year and by every day of your lives. It is *needful* to you that are young, though solicited by so many gay vanities, to neglect it ; though it may be represented as an unseasonable care at present, yet I repeat it, it is needful to you ; immediately needful, unless you who walk so frequently over the dust of your brethren and companions, that died in the bloom and vigour of their days, have made some secret *Covenant with the grave* for yourselves, and found out some wonderful method, hitherto unknown, of securing this precarious life, and of answering for days and months to come, while others cannot answer for one single moment.

2. The care of the soul is " a matter of the highest importance ;" beyond any thing which can be brought into comparison with it.

* 2 Kings vii. 2—17. † Mat. xix. 24. ‡ Mat. vi. 31. § John vi. 27. ‖ Ec. xii. 5.

As Solomon says of wisdom, that it is *More precious than rubies, and that all things which can be desired are not to be compared with her**, so may I properly say of this great and most important branch of wisdom, whatever can be laid in *the balance* with it, will be found *altogether lighter than vanity.* This is strongly implied when it is said in the text, *one thing is needful*; q. d. one thing, and one thing alone is so. Just as the blessed God is said to be *Only wise*†, and *Only holy*‡, because the wisdom and holiness of angels and men is as nothing, when compared with his. What seems most great and most important in life, what kings and senates, what the wisest and greatest of this world are employing their time, their councils, their pens, their labours upon, are trifles, when compared with this *one thing.* A man may subsist, he may in some considerable measure be happy, without learning, without riches, without titles, without health, without liberty, without friends, nay, though the *Life be more than meat, and the body than raiment*§, yet may he be happy, unspeakably happy, without the body itself. But he cannot be so in the neglect of the *one thing needful.* I must therefore bespeak your regard to it in the words of Moses, *It is not a light thing, but it is your life*‖.

3. The care of the soul is of so comprehensive a nature, that every thing truly worthy of our regard may "be considered as included in it, or subservient to it."

As David observes, that the *Commandment of God is exceeding broad*¶, so may we say of this *one thing needful*; and as Solomon very justly and emphatically expresses it, to *Fear God and to keep his commandments is the whole duty of man***; his whole duty, and his whole interest; and every thing which is wise and rational does in its proper place and connection make a part of it. We should judge very ill concerning the nature of this care, if we imagined, that it consisted merely in acts of devotion, or religious contemplation; it comprehends all the lovely and harmonious band of social and humane virtues. It requires a care of society, a care of our bodies, and of our temporal concerns; but then all is to be regulated, directed, and animated by proper regards to God, Christ, and immortality. Our food and our rest, our trades and our labours are to be attended to, and all the offices of humanity performed in obedience to the will of God, for the glory of Christ, and in a view to the improving the mind in a growing meetness for

* Prov. iii. 15. † 1 Tim. i. 17. ‡ Rev. xv. 4. § Mat. vi. 25.
‖ Deut. xxxii. 47. ¶ Ps. cxix. 96. ** Ec. xii. 13.

a state of complete perfection. Name any thing which has no reference at all to this, and you name a worthless trifle, however it may be gilded to allure the eye, however it may be sweetened to gratify the taste. Name a thing which, instead of thus improving the soul, has a tendency to debase and pollute, to enslave and endanger it, and you name what is most unprofitable and mischievous, be the wages of iniquity ever so great; most foul and deformed, be it in the eyes of men ever so honourable, or in their customs ever so fashionable. Thus I have endeavoured to shew you what we may suppose implied in the expression of *one thing* being *needful.* I am now,

III. To shew you with how much propriety the care of the soul may be represented under this character, as the *one thing needful*, as a matter of universal and most serious concern, to which every thing else is to be considered as subservient, if at all worthy of our care and pursuit. Now let me appeal to the sentiments of those who must be allowed most capable of judging, and to the evident reason of the case itself, as it must appear to every unprejudiced mind.

1. Let me argue "from the sentiments of those who must be allowed most capable of judging in such an affair," and we shall quickly see that the care of the soul appears to them the *one thing needful.*

Is the judgment of the blessed God according to truth? how evidently and how solemnly is that judgment declared! I will not say merely in this or the other particular passage of his word, but in the whole series of his revelations to the children of men; and the whole tenor of his addresses to them. Is not this the language of all, from the early days of Job and Moses to the conclusion of the canon of scripture. *If wisdom be hid from the eyes of all the living*, surely *God understandeth the way thereof, he knoweth the place thereof;* and if he does, it is plainly pointed out, for *unto man he* still *saith, behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding* *. By Moses he declared to the Israelites, that to do the commandments of the Lord would be their wisdom and their understanding in the sight of the nations, who should hear his statutes, and say, *Surely this is a wise and understanding people* †. When he had raised up one man on the throne of Israel, with the character of the wisest that ever lived upon the face of the earth, he chose to make him eminently a teacher

* Job xxviii. 21, 23, 28. † Deut. iv. 6.

of this great truth. And now all that he spoke on the curious and less interesting subjects of natural philosophy, is lost, though *He spoke of trees from the cedar to the hyssop, and of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes* *; that saying is preserved in which he testifies, that *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* †, and those proverbs, in almost every line of which they who neglect God and their own souls are spoken of as fools, as if that were the most proper signification of the word, while the religious alone are honoured with the title of wise. But in this respect as attesting this truth in the name of God and in his own *a greater than Solomon is here.*

For if we enquire what it was that our Lord Jesus Christ judged to be the *one thing needful*, the words of the text contain as full an answer as can be imagined ; and the sense of them is repeated in a very lively and emphatical manner, in that remarkable passage wherein our Lord not only declares his own judgment, but seems to appeal to the consciences of all, as obliged by their own secret convictions to subscribe to the truth of it. *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul* ‡ ? If it were once lost, what would he not be willing to give to redeem it ? But it depends not on the *words* of Christ alone. Let his actions, his sufferings, his blood, his death speak what a value he set on the souls of men. Is it to be imagined, that he would have relinquished heaven, that he would have dwelt upon earth, that he would have laboured by night and by day, and at last have expired on the cross, for a matter of light importance ? Or can we think that he, in whom dwell *All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* §, was mistaken in judgment so deliberately formed, and so solemnly declared ?

If, after this, there were room to mention human judgment, and testimonies, how easy would it be to produce a cloud of witnesses in such a cause, and to shew that the wisest and best of men in all ages of the world have agreed in this point, that amidst all the diversities of opinion and profession, which succeeding generations have produced, this has been the unanimous judgment, this the common and most solicitous care of those, whose characters are most truly valuable, to secure the salvation of their own souls, and to promote the salvation of others.

* 1 Kings iv. 33. † Prov. i. 7. ix. 10. ‡ Mat. xvi. 26. § Col. ii. 3, 9.

And let me beseech you seriously to reflect, what are the characters of those who have taken the liberty, most boldly and freely to declare their judgment on the contrary side? The number of such is comparatively few; and when you compare what you have observed of their temper and conduct, I will not say with what you read of holy men of old, but with what you have yourselves seen in the faithful, active, and zealous servants of Christ in these latter ages, with whom you have conversed, do you not on the whole find that the rejectors and deriders of the gospel, are in other respects, so much more prudent and judicious, so much wiser for themselves, and for others that are influenced by them, as that you can be in reason obliged to pay any great deference to the authority of a few such names as these, in opposition to those to which they are here opposed?

But you will say, and you will say it too truly, though but a few may venture in words to declare for the neglect of the soul and its eternal interest, the greater part of mankind do it in their actions. But are the greater part of mankind so wise, and so good, as implicitly to be followed in matters of the highest importance? And do not multitudes of these declare themselves on the other side, in their most serious moments? When the intoxications of worldly business and pleasures are over, and some languishing sickness forces men to solitude and retirement; what have you generally observed to be the effect of such a circumstance? Have they not then declared themselves convinced of the truth we are now labouring to establish? Nay, do we not sometimes see that a distemper which seizes the mind with violence, yet does not utterly destroy its reasoning faculties, fixes this conviction on the soul in a few hours, nay sometimes in a few moments? Have you never seen a gay, thoughtless creature, surprised in the giddy round of pleasures and amusements, and presently brought not only to seriousness, but terror and trembling, by the near views of death? Have you never seen the man of business and care interrupted, like the rich fool in the parable, in the midst of his schemes for the present world? And have you not heard one and the other of them owning the vanity of those pleasures and cares, which but a few days ago were every thing to them? Confessing that religion was the *one thing needful*, and recommending it to others with an earnestness, as if they hoped thereby to atone for their own former neglect? We that are ministers frequently are witnesses to such things as these, and I believe few of our hearers are entire strangers to them.

And once more, what if to the testimony of the dying, we could add that of the dead? What if God were to turn aside the veil which separates between us and the invisible world, and to permit the most careless sinner in the assembly to converse for a few moments with the inhabitants of it? If you were to apply yourself to a happy spirit, that trod the most thorny road to Paradise, or passed through the most fiery trial, and to ask him, "Was it worth your while to labour so much, and to endure so much for what you now possess?" Surely if the blessed in heaven were capable of indignation, it would move them to hear that it should be made a question. And on the other hand, if you could enquire of one *Tormented in that flame* below, though he might once be *clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day* *, if you could ask him, "Whether his former enjoyments were any equivalent for his present sufferings and despair?" What answer do you suppose he would return? Perhaps an answer of so much horror and rage, as you would not be able so much as to indure. Or if the malignity of his nature should prevent him from returning any answer at all, surely there would be a language even in that silence, a language in the darkness, and flames, and groans of that infernal prison, which would speak to your very soul what the word of God is with equal certainty, though less forcible conviction, speaking to your ear, that *one thing is needful.* You see it is so in the judgment of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, of the wisest and best of men, of many, who seemed to judge most differently of it, when they come to more deliberate and serious thought, and not only of the dying, but of the dead too, of those who have experimentally known both worlds, and most surely know what is to be preferred. But I will not rest the whole argument here, I add therefore,

2. I appeal to the evident reason of the case itself, as it must appear to every unprejudiced mind, that the care of the soul is indeed *the one thing needful.*

I still consider myself as speaking not to atheists, or to deists, but to those who not only believe the existence and providence of God, and a future state of happiness and misery, but likewise who credit the truth of the christian revelation, as many undoubtedly do, who live in a fatal neglect of God and their own souls. Now on these principles a little reflection may be sufficient to convince you, that it is *needful* to the present

* Luke xvi. 19.

repose of your own mind; *needful* if ever you would secure eternal happiness; if ever you would avoid eternal misery, which will be aggravated, rather than alleviated, by all your present enjoyments.

1. The care of the soul is the *one thing needful*, because "without it you cannot secure the peace of your own mind, nor avoid the upbraidings of your conscience."

That noble faculty is, indeed, as you are often told, the vicegerent of God in the soul. It is sensible of the dignity and worth of an immortal Spirit, and will sometimes cry out of the violence that is offered to it, and cry so loud, as to compel the sinner to hear, whether he will or no. Do you not sometimes find it yourselves? When you labour most to forget the concerns of your soul, do they not sometimes force themselves on your remembrance? You are afraid of the reflections of your own mind, but with all your artifice and all your resolution, can you entirely avoid them? Does not conscience follow you to your beds, even if denied the opportunity of meeting you in your closets, and though with an unwelcome voice, there warn you, "that your soul is neglected and will quickly be lost?" Does it not follow you to your shops and your fields, when you are busiest there? Nay, I will add, does it not sometimes follow you to the feast, to the club, to the dance, and perhaps, amidst all resistance, to the theatre too? Does it not sometimes mingle your sweetest draughts with wormwood, and your gayest scenes with horror? So that you are like a tradesman, who, suspecting his affairs to be in a bad posture, lays by his books and his papers, yet sometimes they will come accidentally in his way. He hardly dares to look abroad for fear of meeting a creditor or an arrest; and if he labours to forget his cares and his dangers, in a course of luxury at home, the remembrance is sometimes awakened, and the alarm increased, by those very extravagances in which he is attempting to lose it. Such, no doubt, is the case of some of your minds, and it is a very painful state; and while things are thus within, external circumstances can no more make you happy, than a fine dress could relieve you under a violent fit of the stone. Whereas if this great affair were secured, you might delight in reflection, as much as you now dread it; and conscience, of your bitterest enemy, would become a delightful friend, and the testimony of it your greatest rejoicing.

2. The care of the soul is the *one thing needful*, "because without it you cannot possibly secure your eternal happiness."

A crown of everlasting glory is not surely such a trifle as

to be thrown away on a careless creature, that will not in good earnest pursue it. God doth not ordinarily deal thus, even with the bounties of his common providence, which are comparatively of little value. As to these, the *hand of the diligent* generally *makes rich*, and he would be thought distracted, rather than prudent, who should expect to get an estate merely by wishing for it, or without some resolute and continued application to a proper course of action for that purpose. Now, that we may not foolishly dream of obtaining heaven, in the midst of a course of indolence and sloth, we are expressly told in the word of God, that *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force* *; and are therefore exhorted to *Strive*, with the greatest intenseness, and eagerness of mind, as the word properly signifies, *to enter in at the strait gate*, for this great and important reason, *because many shall* another day *seek to enter in, and shall not be able* †. Nay, when our Lord makes the most gracious promises to the humble petitioner, he does it in such a manner as to exclude the hopes of those who are careless and indifferent. *Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you* ‡. If therefore you do not *ask*, *seek* and *knock*, the door of mercy will not be opened, and eternal happiness will be lost.

And surely if I could say no more as to the fatal consequences of your neglect, than this, that eternal happiness will be lost, I should say enough to impress every mind that considers what eternity means. To fall into a state of everlasting forgetfulness might indeed appear a refuge to a mind filled with the apprehension of future misery. But, oh how dreadful a refuge is it! Surely it is such a refuge, as a vast precipice, from which a man falling would be dashed to pieces in a moment, might appear to a person pursued by the officers of justice, that he might be brought out to a painful and lingering execution. If an extravagant youth would have reason to look round with anguish on some fair and ample paternal inheritance, which he had sold or forfeited merely for the riot of a few days: How much more melancholy would it be for a rational mind to think that its eternal happiness is lost for any earthly consideration whatever. Tormenting thought! had I attended to that *one thing* which I have neglected, I might have been great and happy, beyond expression, beyond conception. Not merely for the little span of ten thousand thousand ages, but for ever. So that the

* Mat. xi. 12. † Luke xiii. 24. ‡ Mat. vii. 7.

moment would have come, when, if it had been asked concerning me, "How long has that glorious Spirit been an inhabitant of heaven? How long has it been enjoying God, and itself, in that state of perfection?"——The answer would have been such, that a line reaching even to the remotest star would not have been able to contain the number of ages, nor would millions of years have been sufficient to figure them down. This is eternity, but I have lost it, and am now on the verge of being. This lamp, which might have outlasted those of the firmament, will presently be extinguished, and I blotted out from amongst the works of God, and cut off from all the bounties of his hand. Would not this be a very miserable case, if this were all? And would it not be sufficient to prove this to be *the better part*, which, as our Lord observes, can *never be taken away?* But God forbid that we should be so unfaithful to him, and to the souls of men, as to rest in such a representation alone. I therefore add once more,

3. The care of the soul is *the one thing needful*, because "without it you cannot avoid a state of eternal misery, which will be aggravated, rather than alleviated by all your present enjoyments."

Nothing can be more evident from the word of the God of truth. If there plainly appears to be a determined case, which leaves no room for a more favourable conjecture or hope. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the nations that forget God*. They shall go away into everlasting punishment* †, into a state where they shall in vain seek *death*, and *death shall flee from them.* Oh! Sirs, it is a certain, but an awful truth, that your souls will be thinking and immortal beings, even in spite of themselves. They may indeed torment, but they cannot destroy themselves. They can no more suspend their power of thought and perception, than a mirror its property of reflecting rays that fall on its surface. Do you suspect the contrary? Make the trial immediately. Command your minds to cease from thinking but for one quarter of an hour, or for half that time, and exclude every idea and every reflection. Can you succeed in that attempt? Or rather, does not thought press in with a more sensible violence on that resistance; as an anxious desire to sleep, makes us so much the more wakeful. Thus will thought follow you beyond the grave, thus will it, as an unwelcome guest, force itself upon you, when it can serve only to perplex and distress the mind. It will for ever upbraid you,

* Psal. ix. 17. † Mat. xxv. 46.

that notwithstanding all the kind expostulations of God and man, notwithstanding all the keen remonstrances of conscience, and the pleadings of the blood of Christ, you have gone on in your folly, till heaven is lost, and damnation incurred; and all for what? for a shadow and a dream.

Oh think not, sinners, that the remembrance of your past pleasures, of your success in your other cares, whilst that of the *one thing needful* was forgotten, think not that this will ease your minds. It will rather torment them the more. *Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things.* Bitter remembrance! Well might the heathen poets represent the unhappy spirits in the shades below, as eagerly catching at the water of forgetfulness, yet unable to reach it. Your present comforts will only serve, to give you a livelier sense of your misery, as having tasted such degrees of enjoyment; and to inflame the reckoning, as you have misimproved those talents lodged in your hands for better purposes. Surely, if these things were believed, and seriously considered, the sinner would have no more heart to rejoice in his present prosperity, than a man would have to amuse himself with the curiosities of a fine garden, through which he was led to be broke upon the rack.

But I will enlarge no farther on these things. Would to God that the unaccountable stupidity of men's minds, and their fatal attachment to the pleasures and cares of the present life, did not make it necessary to insist on them so frequently and so copiously!

IV. I proceed to the reflections which naturally arise from hence, and shall only mention two.

1. How much reason have we to lament the folly of mankind in neglecting the *one thing needful.*

If religion be indeed the truest wisdom, then surely we have the justest reason to say with Solomon, that folly and *Madness is in men's hearts**. Is it the *one thing needful?* Look on the conduct of the generality of mankind, and you would imagine they thought it the *one thing needless:* The vainest dream and the idlest amusement of the mind. God is admonishing them by ordinances, and providences, sometimes by such as are most awful, to lay it to heart; he *Speaks once, yea twice*, yea, a multitude of times, *but man regards not*†. They profess perhaps to believe all that I have been saying, but act as if the contrary were self-evident; they will risk these souls and this eternity, for a thing of nought, for that for the sake of which they would not

* Eccl. ix. 3. † Job xxxiii. 14.

risk so much as a hand, or a finger, or a joint, no, nor perhaps a toy that adorns it. Surely this is the wonder of angels, and perhaps of devils too, unless the observation of so many ages may have rendered it familiar to both. And can we, my christian brethren, behold such a scene with indifference? If some epidemical madness had seized our country, or the places where we live, so that as we went from one place to another, we should every where meet with lunatics, and see, among the rest, some perhaps of the finest genius and improvements, and in the most eminent stations in life, amusing themselves with straws and bubbles, or wounding themselves and others; surely were we ever so secure from the danger of infection or assault, the sight would cut us to the heart. Surely a good-natured man would hardly be able to go abroad, or even be desirous to live, if it must be amongst so many sad spectacles. Yet these poor creatures might, notwithstanding this, be the children of God, and the higher their frenzy rose, the nearer might their complete happiness be. But alas, the greater part of mankind are seized with a worse kind of madness, in which they are ruining their souls: And can we behold it with indifference! The Lord awaken our compassion, our prayer, and our endeavours in dependance on divine grace, that we may be instrumental in bringing them to their right mind, and making them wise indeed, that is, wise to salvation.

2. How necessary is it that we should seriously enquire how this *one thing needful* is regarded by us!

Let me intreat you to remember your own concern in it, and inquire——Have I thought seriously of it?——Have I seen the importance of it?——Has it lain with a due and an abiding weight on my mind?——Has it brought me to Christ, that I might lay the stress of these great eternal interests on him?——And am I acting in the main of my life as one that has these convictions?——Am I willing in fact to give up other things, my interests, my pleasures, my passions to this?——Am I conversing with God and with man as one that believes these things, as one that has deliberately chosen *the better part*, and is determined to abide by that choice?

Observe the answer which conscience returns to these inquiries, and you will know your own part in that more particular application, with which I am to conclude my discourse.

1. Let me address those that are entirely unconcerned about the *one thing needful.*

Sirs, I have been stating the case at large, and now I appeal to your consciences, are these things so? or are they not? God

and your own hearts best know for what the care of your soul is neglected ; but be it what it will, the difference between one grain of sand, and another, is not great, when it comes to be weighed against a talent of gold. Whatever it is, you had need to examine it carefully. You had need to view that commodity on all sides, of which you do in effect say, for this will I sell my soul, for this will I give up heaven and venture hell, be heaven and hell whatever they may. In the name of God, Sirs, is this the part of a man, of a rational creature ? To go on with your eyes open towards a pit of eternal ruin, because there are a few gay flowers in the way. Or what if you shut your eyes ? will that prevent your fall ? It signifies little to say, I will not think of these things, I will not consider them. God has said, *In the last days they shall consider it perfectly* *, The revels of a drunken malefactor will not prevent, nor respite his execution. Pardon my plainness ; if it were a fable, or a tale, I would endeavour to amuse you with words, but I cannot do it where your souls are at stake.

2. I would apply to those who are convinced of the importance of their souls, yet are inclined to defer that care of them a little longer, which in the general they see to be necessary.

I know, you that are young are under peculiar temptations to do this ; though it is strange that the death of so many of your companions should not be an answer to some of the most specious and dangerous of those temptations. Methinks if there were the least degree of uncertainty, the importance is too weighty to put matters to the venture. But here the uncertainty is great and apparent. You must surely know that there are critical seasons of life for managing the concerns of it, which are of such a nature, that, if once lost, they may never return : Here is a critical season. *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation* †. *To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts* ‡. This language may not be spoken to-morrow ; Talk not of a more *convenient season*, none can be more convenient : and that to which you would probably refer it, is least of all so. A dying time. You would not choose then to have any important business in hand ; and will you of choice refer the greatest business of all to that languishing, hurrying, amazing hour ? If a friend were then to come to you with the balance of an intricate account, or a view of a title to an estate, you would shake your fainting head, and lift up your pale trembling hand, and

* Jer. xxiii. 20. † 2 Cor. vi. 2. ‡ Heb. iii. 7, 8.

say perhaps with a feeble voice, "Alas, is this a time for these things?" And is it a time for so much greater things than these? I wish you knew, and would consider into what a strait we that are ministers are sometimes brought, when we are called to the dying beds of those who have spent their lives in the neglect of the *one thing needful.* On the one hand we fear, lest if we palliate matters, and speak smooth things, we shall betray and ruin their souls; and on the other, that if we use a becoming plainness and seriousness, in warning them of their danger, we shall quite overwhelm them, and hasten the dying moment which is advancing by such swift steps. Oh let me entreat you, for our sakes, and much more for your own, that you do not drive us to such sad extremities: But that if you are convinced, as I hope some of you may now be, that the care of the soul is that *needful thing* we have represented, let the conviction work, let it drive you immediately to the throne of grace, that from thence you may derive that wisdom and strength which may direct you in all the intricacies which intangle you, and animate you in the midst of difficulty and discouragement.

3. I would in the last place, address myself to those happy souls who have in good earnest attended to the *one thing needful.*

I hope when you see how commonly it is neglected, neglected indeed by many, whose natural capacities, improvements, and circumstances in life, appear to you superior to your own, you will humbly acknowledge, that it was distinguishing grace that brought you into this happy state, and formed you to this most necessary care. Bless the Lord therefore who hath given you that counsel, in virtue of which you can say that he is your portion.——Rejoice in the thought that the great concern is secured; as it is natural for us to do, when some important affair is dispatched which has long lain before us, and which we have been inclined to put off from one day to another, but have at length strenuously and successfully attended.——Remember still to continue acting on these great principles which at first determined your choice; and seriously consider, that those who desire their *life* may at last be *given* them *for a prey*, must continue on their guard, in all stages of their journey through a wilderness, where daily dangers are still surrounding them. Having secured the great concern, make yourselves easy as to others of smaller importance. You have chosen *The kingdom of God, and his righteousness, other things therefore shall be added unto you;* and if any which you desire should not be added, comfort yourselves with this thought, that you have *the good part which can never be taken away.* And, not to

enlarge on these obvious hints, which must so often occur, be very solicitous that others may be brought to a care about the *one thing needful.* If it be *needful* for you, it is so for your children, your friends, your servants. Let them therefore see your concern in this respect for them, as well as for yourselves. Let parents, especially, attend to this exhortation, whose care for their offspring often exceeds in other respects, and fails in this. Remember that your children may never live to enjoy the effects of your labour and concern, to get them estates and portions. The charges of their funerals may perhaps be all their share of what you are so anxiously careful to lay up for them. And oh! think what a sword would pierce through your very heart, if you should stand by the corpse of a beloved child with this reflection, "This poor creature has done with life before it learnt its great business in it, and is gone to eternity, which I have seldom been warning it to prepare for, and which perhaps it learnt of me to forget."

On the whole, may this grand care be awakened in those by whom it has been hitherto neglected; may it be revived in each of our minds! And that you may be encouraged to pursue it with greater cheerfulness, let me conclude with this comfortable thought, that in proportion to the necessity of the case, is the provision which divine grace has made for our assistance. If you are disposed to sit down at Christ's feet, he will teach you by his word and Spirit. If you commit this precious jewel, which is your eternal all, into his hand, he will preserve it unto that day, and will then produce it richly adorned, and gloriously improved to his own honour, and to your everlasting joy. Amen.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

## SUBMISSION TO DIVINE PROVIDENCE

IN

## THE DEATH OF CHILDREN,

*Recommended and enforced, in a Sermon preached at Northampton, on the Death of a very amiable and hopeful Child, about Five Years old.*

## PREFACE.

THE discourse which I now offer to the public was drawn up on a very sorrowful occasion; the death of a most desirable child, who was formed in such a correspondence to my own relish and temper, as to be able to give me a degree of delight, and consequently of distress, which I did not before think it possible I could have received from a little creature who had not quite completed her fifth year.

Since the sermon was preached, it has pleased God to make the like breaches on the families of several of my friends; and, with regard to some of them, the affliction hath been attended with circumstances of yet sorer aggravation. Though several of them are removed to a considerable distance from me, and from each other, I have borne their afflictions upon my heart with cordial sympathy; and it is with a particular desire of serving them, that I have undertaken the sad task of reviewing and transcribing these papers; which may almost be called the minutes of my own sighs and tears, over the poor remains of my eldest, and of this kind, dearest hope, when they were not as yet buried out of my sight.

They are, indeed, full of affection, and to be sure some may think they are too full of it: but let them consider the subject, and the circumstances, and surely they will pardon it. I apprehend, I could not have treated such a subject coldly, had I writ upon it many years ago, when I was untaught in the school of affliction, and knew nothing of such a calamity as this, but by speculation or report: how much less could I do it, when God had touched me in so tender a part, and, to allude to a celebrated ancient story, called me out to appear on a public stage, as with an urn in my hand, which contained the ashes of my own child!

In such a sad situation, parents, at least, will forgive the tears of a parent, and those meltings of soul which over-flow in the following pages. I have not attempted to run through the common-place of immoderate grief, but have only selected a few obvious thoughts which I found peculiarly suitable to myself; and, I bless God, I can truly say, they gave me a solid and substantial relief, under a shock of sorrow, which would otherwise have broken my spirits.

On my own experience, therefore, I would recommend them to others, in the like condition. And let me intreat my friends and fellow-sufferers to remember, that it is not a low degree of submission to the divine will, which is called for in the ensuing discourse. It is comparatively an easy thing to

behave with external decency, to refrain from bold censures, and outrageous complaints, or to speak in the outward language of resignation. But it is not so easy to get rid of every repining thought, and to forbear taking it, in some degree at least, unkindly, that the God whom we love and serve, in whose friendship we have long trusted and rejoiced, should act what, to sense, seems so unfriendly a part: that he should take away a child; and if a child, that child; and if that child, at that age; and if at that age, with this or that particular circumstance; which seems the very contrivance of providence, to add double anguish to the wound; and all this, when he could so easily have recalled it; when we know him to have done it for so many others; when we so earnestly desired it; when we sought it with such importunity, and yet, as we imagine, with so much submission too:——That, notwithstanding all this, he should tear it away with an inexorable hand, and leave us, it may be for a while, under the load, without any extraordinary comforts and supports, to balance so grievous a trial.——In these circumstances, not only to justify, but to glorify God in all,——cheerfully to subscribe to his will,——cordially to approve it as merciful and gracious,——so as to be able to say, as the pious and excellent archbishop of Cambray did, when his royal pupil, and the hopes of a nation were taken away*, "If there needed no more than to move a straw to bring him to life again, I would not do it, since the divine pleasure is otherwise."——This, this is a difficult lesson indeed; a triumph of christian faith and love, which I fear many of us are yet to learn.

But let us follow after it, and watch against the first rising of a contrary temper, as most injurious to God, and prejudicial to ourselves. To preserve us against it, let us review the considerations now to be proposed, as what we are to digest into our hearts, and work into our thoughts and our passions. And I would hope, that if we do in good earnest make the attempt, we shall find this discourse a cooling and sweetening medicine, which may allay that inward heat and sharpness, with which, in a case like ours, the heart is often inflamed and corroded. I commend it, such as it is, to the blessing of the great physician, and could wish the reader to make up its many deficiencies, by Mr. Flavel's Token for Mourners, and Dr. Grosvenor's Mourner; to which if it suit his relish, he may please to add Sir William Temple's Essay on the Excess of Grief: Three tracts which, in their very different strains and styles, I cannot but look upon as in the number of the best which our language, or, perhaps, any other, has produced upon this subject.

As for this little piece of mine, I question not, but, like the generality of single sermons, it will soon be worn out and forgot. But in the mean time, I would humbly hope, that some tender parent, whom providence has joined with me in sad similitude of grief, may find some consolation from it, while sitting by the coffin of a beloved child, or mourning over its grave. And I particularly hope it, with regard to those dear and valuable friends, whose sorrows, on the like occasion, have lately been added to my own. I desire that though they be not expressly named, they would please to consider this sermon as most affectionately and respectfully dedicated to them; and would, in return, give me a share in their prayers, that all the vicissitudes of life may concur to quicken me in the duties of it, and to ripen me for that blessed world, where I hope many of those dear delights, which are now withering around us, will spring up in fairer and more durable forms. Amen.

*Northampton, Jan. 31st, 1736-7.*

* The duke of Burgundy. See Cambray's Life, p. 329.

# POSTSCRIPT.

I COULD easily shew, with how much propriety I have called the dear deceased an amiable and hopeful child, by a great many little stories, which parents would perhaps read with pleasure, and children might hear with some improvement: yet as I cannot be sure that no others may happen to read the discourse, I dare not trust my pen and my heart on so delicate a subject. One circumstance I will however venture to mention, (as I see here is a blank page left) which may indeed be considered as a specimen of many others. As she was a great darling with most of our friends that knew her, she often received invitations to different places at the same time; and when I once asked her, on such an occasion, what made every body love her so well; she answered me, with that simplicity and spirit, which alas! charmed me too much, Indeed, papa, I cannot think, unless it be because I love every body. A sentiment obvious to the understanding of a child, yet not unworthy the reflection of the wisest man *.

* Tibi monstrabo amatorium sine medicamento, sine herbis, sine ullius veneficæ carmine, *Si vis amari, ama.* Sen.

# SERMON II.

2 Kings iv. 25, 26.—*And it came to pass when the Man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi, his Servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunamite: Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say, unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thine Husband? Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.*

WHEN the apostle would encourage our hope and trust in the tenderness of Christ as the great high priest, and convince us that he is capable of being touched with a sympathetic sense of our infirmities, he argues at large from this consideration, that Jesus, *Was in all points tempted like us;* so that as *He himself has suffered, being tempted, he knows how* more compassionately *to succour* those that are under the like trials*. Now this must surely intimate, that it is not in human nature, even in its most perfect state, so tenderly to commiserate any sorrows, as those which our own hearts have felt: as we cannot form a perfect idea of any bitter kind of draught, by the most exact description, till we have ourselves tasted it. It is probably for this reason, amongst others, that God frequently exercises such, as have the honour to be inferior shepherds in the flock of Christ, with a long train of various afflictions, *That we may be able to comfort them who are in* the like *trouble, with those consolations with which we have ourselves been comforted of God*†. And, if we have the temper which becomes our office, it will greatly reconcile us to our trials, to consider, that from our weeping eyes, and our bleeding hearts, a balm may be extracted to heal the sorrows of others, and a cordial to revive their fainting spirits. May we never be left to sink under our burden, in such a manner, that there should be room, after all that we have boasted of the strength of religious supports, to apply to us the words of Eliphaz to Job ‡, *Thou hast strengthened the weak hands, and upheld him that was ready to fall; but now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it touches thee, and thou art troubled!* May we never behave, as if *The consolations of God were small* §; lest it should be *As when a standard-bearer fainteth* ‖; and whole companies of soldiers are thrown into confusion and distress!

* Heb. iv. 15.—ii. 18. † 2 Cor. i. 4. ‡ Job iv. 3—5. §Job xv. 11. ‖ Is. x. 18.

My friends, you are witnesses for me, that I have not stood by as an unconcerned spectator amidst the desolations of your respective families, when God's awful hand hath been lopping off those tender branches from them, which were once our common hope and delight. I have often put my soul in the stead of yours, and endeavoured to give such a turn to my public as well as my private discourses, as might be a means of composing and cheering our minds, and forming you to a submissive temper, that you might *Be subject to the Father of spirits, and live* *. In this view I have, at different times largely insisted on the example of Aaron, who *Held his peace*†, when his two sons were struck dead in a moment by fire from the Lord, which destroyed them in the very act of their sin; and I have also represented that of Job, who, when the death of ten children by one blow was added to the spoil of his great possessions, could say, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord*‡. The instance which is before us, is not indeed so memorable as these; but to present circumstances it is, in many respects, more suitable: and it may the rather deserve our notice, as it shews us the wisdom, composure, and piety of one of the weaker and tenderer sex, on an occasion of such aggravated distress, that had Aaron or Job behaved just as she did, we must have acknowledged, that they had not sunk beneath the dignity of their character, nor appeared unworthy of our applause, and our imitation.

Indeed there may be some reason to imagine, that it was with design to humble those who are in distinguished stations of life, and who have peculiar advantages and obligations to excel in religion, that God has shewn us in scripture, as well as in common life, some bright examples of piety, where they could hardly have been expected in so great a degree; and hath, as it were, *Perfected praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings*§. Thus when *Zacharias*‖ an aged priest, doubted the veracity of the angel which appeared to assure him of the birth of his child, which was to be produced in an ordinary way; Mary, an obscure young virgin, could believe a far more unexampled event, and said, with humble faith and thankful consent, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word*¶. Jonah the prophet, though favoured with such immediate revelations, and so lately delivered, in a mira-

* Heb. xii. 9. † Lev. x. 3. ‡ Job i. 21.
§ Mat. xxi. 16. ‖ Luke i. 18. ¶ Luke i. 38.

culous way, from the very *Belly of hell* *, was thrown into a most indecent transport of passion, on the withering of a gourd; so that he presumed to tell the Almighty to his face, that *He did well to be angry even unto death*†; whereas this pious woman preserves the calmness and serenity of her temper, when she had lost a child, a son, an only child who had been given beyond all natural hope, and therefore to be sure was so much the dearer, and the expectation from him so much the higher. Yet these expectations dashed almost in a moment; and this, when he was grown up to an age when children are peculiarly entertaining; for he was old enough to be with his *Father in the field*; where no doubt he was diverting him with his fond prattle; yet he was not too big to be laid *On his mother's knees* ‡ when he came home complaining of his head; so that he was probably about five or six years old. This amiable child was well in the morning, and dead by noon; a pale corpse in his mother's arms! and he now *lay dead in the house*; and yet she had the faith, and the goodness to say, *It is well.*

This good woman had found the prophet Elisha grateful for all the favours he had received at her house; where she had from time to time accommodated him in his journies, and thought it an honour rather than an incumbrance. She had experienced the power of his prayers, in answer to which the child had been given; and it is extremely probable, that she also recollected the miracle which Elijah had wrought a few years before, though till that time the like had not been known in Israel, or on earth; I mean, in raising from the dead the child of that widow of *Sarepta* § who had nourished him during the famine. She might therefore think it a possible case, that the miracle might be renewed; at least, she knew not how to comfort herself better, than by going to so good a friend, and asking his counsels and his prayers, to enable her to bear her affliction, if it must not be removed ‖.

Accordingly she hasted to him; and he, on the other side, discovered the temper of a real friend, in the message with which he sent Gehazi his servant to meet her, *while she was yet afar off.* The moment she appeared, the concerns of her whole family seem to have come into his kind heart at once, and he particularly asks, *Is it well with thee? Is it well with thine husband? Is it well with the child?* A beautiful example of that affectionate care for the persons and families of their

* Jon. ii. 2. † Jon. iv. 9. ‡ 2 Kings iv. 18, 20.
‡ 1 Kings xvii. 17. & seq. ‖ See Henry, in loc.

friends, which christian ministers who, like the prophets of old, are called *Men of God** should habitually bear about in their hearts; which should be awakened by every sight of them, and expressed on every proper occasion.

Her answer was very remarkable: *She said, it is well.* Perhaps she meant this, to divert the more particular enquiry of the servant; as she had before made the same answer to her husband, when he had examined into the reason of her intended journey, as probably not knowing of the sad breach which had been made: *She said, it is well* †; which was a civil way of intimating her desire that he would not ask any more particular questions. But I cannot see any reason to restrain the words to this meaning alone: we have ground to believe, from the piety she expressed in her first regards to Elisha, and the opportunities which she had of improving in religion by the frequent converse of that holy man, that when she used this language, she intended thereby to express her resignation to the divine will in what had lately passed: and this might be the meaning of her heart, though one ignorant of the particulars of her case, might not fully understand it from such ambiguous words; "*It is well* on the whole. Though my family be afflicted, we are afflicted in faithfulness; though my dear babe be dead, yet my heavenly father is just, and he is good in all. He knows how to bring glory to himself, and advantage to us, from this stroke. Whether this application do, or do not succeed, whether the child be, or be not restored, *it is* still *well* with him, and *well* with us; for we are in such wise and such gracious hands, that I would not allow one murmuring word, or one repining thought." So that, on the whole, the sentiment of this good Shunamite was much the same with that of Hezekiah, when he answered to that dreadful threatening which imported the destruction of his children, *Good is the word of the Lord which he hath spoken* ‡; or that of Job, when he heard that all his sons and his daughters were crushed under the ruins of their elder brother's house, and yet, in the fore-cited words, *blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Now this is the temper to which, by divine assistance, we should all labour to bring our own hearts, when God puts this bitter cup into our hands, and takes away with a stroke those dear little ones, which were *the desire of our eyes* §, and the joy of our hearts. Let us not content ourselves, in such circumstances, with *keeping the door of our lips*‖, that we break not out into

* 1 Tim. vi. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 17. † 2 Kings iv. 23.
‡ Is. xxxix. 8. § Ezek. xxiv. 1, 6. ‖ Ps. cxli. 3.

any indecencies of complaint; let us not attempt to harden ourselves against our sorrows by a stern insensibility, or that sullen resolution which sometimes says, *It is a grief, and I must bear it**; but let us labour, for a great labour it will indeed be, to compose and quiet our souls, calmly to acquiesce in this painful dispensation, nay, cordially to approve it as in present circumstances every way fit.

It will be the main business of this discourse, to prove how reasonable such a temper is, or to shew how much cause christian parents have to borrow the language of the text, when their infant offspring is taken away, and to say with the pious Shunamite, in the noblest sense that her words will bear,——*It is well.*

And here I would more particularly shew,—It is well in the general, because God does it:—It is surely well for the pious parents in particular, because it is the work of their covenant God:—They may see many respects in which it is evidently so, by observing what useful lessons it has a tendency to teach them:—And they have reason to hope, it is well with those dear creatures whom God hath removed in their early days.

These are surely convincing reasons to the understanding: yet who can say, that they shall be reasons to the heart? *Arise, O God, and plead thine own cause*† in the most effectual manner! May thy powerful and gracious voice appease the swelling billows of the passions, and produce a great and delightful calm in our souls, in which we may yet enjoy thee and ourselves, though a part of our treasure be for the present swallowed up!

I. There is surely reason, in such a case, to say *it is well*,—because God doth it.

This passed for an unanswerable reason with David, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*‡, and with good old Eli, under a severer trial than ours, *It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth good in his sight*§. And shall we object against the force of it? Was it a reason to David, and to Eli, and it is not equally so to us? Or have we any new right to *Reply against God*‖, which those eminent saints had not?

*His kingdom ruleth over all*¶; and there is *Not* so much as *a sparrow that falls to the ground without our Father, but the very hairs of our head are all numbered*** by him. Can we

* Jer. x. 19. † Psal. lxxiv. 22. ‡ Psal. xxxix. 9. § 1 Sam. iii. 18.
‖ Rom. ix. 20. ¶ Psal. ciii. 19. ** Mat. x. 29, 30.

then imagine that our dear children fall into their graves without his notice or interposition? Did that watchful eye that *Keepeth Israel*, now, for the first time, *slumber and sleep**, and an enemy lay hold on that fatal moment to bear away these precious spoils, and bury our joys and our hopes in the dust? Did some malignant hand stop up the avenues of life, and break its springs, so as to baffle all the tenderness of the parent, and all the skill of the physician? Whence does such a thought come, and whither would it lead? Diseases and accidents are but second causes, which owe all their operations to the continued energy of the great original cause. Therefore God says *I will bereave them of children*†; *I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke*‡. *He changeth their countenance, and sendeth them away* §. *Thou Lord turnest man to destruction, and sayest, return ye children of men* ‖. And what shall we say? Are not the administrations of his providence wise and good? Can we *Teach him knowledge* ¶? Can we tax him with injustice? Shall the most high God learn of us how to govern the world, and be instructed by our wisdom when to remove his creatures from one state of being to another? Or do we imagine that his administration, in the general right and good, varies when he comes to *Touch our bone and our flesh***? Is that the secret language of our soul, "That *it is well*, others should drink of the cup, but not we; that any families but ours should be broken, and any hearts but ours should be wounded?" Who might not claim the like exemption? And what would become of the divine government in general; or where would be his obedient homage from his creatures, if each should begin to complain, as soon as it comes to his own turn to suffer? Much fitter is it for us to conclude, that our own afflictions may be as reasonable as those of others; that amidst all the *Clouds and darkness* of his present dispensation, *Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne*††; and, in a word, that *it is well*, because God hath done it. It suits the general scheme of the divine providence, and to an obedient submissive creature that might be enough; but it is far from being all. For,

II. Pious parents, under such a dispensation, may conclude *it is well* for them in particular,—because he, who hath done it, is their covenant God.

This is the great promise, to which all the saints under the Old and New Testament are heirs, *I will be to them a God, and*

* Psal. cxxi. 4. † Jer. xv. 7. ‡ Ezek. xxiv. 16. § Job. xiv. 20.
‖ Psal. xc. 3. ¶ Job xxi. 22. ** Job ii. 5. †† Psal. xcvii. 2.

*they shall be to me a people**: and if we are interested in it, the happy consequence is, that we being his, all our concerns are his also; all are humbly resigned to him,—and graciously administered by him,—and incomparably better blessings bestowed and secured, than any which the most afflictive providence can remove.

If we have any share in this everlasting covenant, all that we are or have, must, of course, have been solemnly surrendered to God. And this is a thought peculiarly applicable to the case immediately in view. "Did I not," may the christian, in such a sad circumstance, generally say, "did I not, in a very solemn manner, bring this my child to God in baptism, and in that ordinance recognize his right to it? Did I not, with all humble *Subjection to the Father of spirits*†, and *Father of mercies*‡, lay it down at his feet, perhaps with an express, at least to be sure with a tacit consent, that it should be disposed of by him, as his infinite wisdom and goodness should direct, whether for life or for death? And am I now to complain of him, because he has removed not only a creature of his own, but one of the children of his family? Or shall I pretend, after all, to set up a claim in opposition to his? A heathen parent, even from the light of nature, might have learned silent submission: how much more then a christian parent, who hath presented his child to God in this initiatory ordinance; and perhaps also many a time, both before and since, hath presented himself at the table of the Lord! Have I not there taken that cup of blessings, with a declared resolution of accepting every other *Cup* how bitter soever it might be, *which my heavenly Father* should see fit to *put into my hand*§? When I have perhaps felt some painful fore-bodings of what I am now suffering; I have, in my own thoughts, particularly singled out that dear object of my cares and my hopes, to lay it down anew at my Father's feet, and say, Lord thou gavest it to me, and I resign it to thee; continue, or remove it, as thou pleasest. And did I then mean to trifle with God? Did I mean in effect to say, Lord, I will give it up, if thou wilt not take it?"

Reflect farther, I beseech you, on your secret retirement, and think, as surely some of you may, "How often have I there been on my knees before God on account of this child; and what was then my language? Did I say, Lord, I absolutely insist on its recovery; I cannot, on any terms or any considerations whatsoever, bear to think of losing it?" Sure we were

* Heb. viii. 10. † Heb. xii. 9. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 3. § John xviii. 11.

none of us so indecently transported with the fondest passion, as to be so *Rash with our mouths as to utter such things before the great God**. Such presumption had deserved a much heavier punishment than we are now bearing, and, if not retracted, may perhaps still have it.—Did not one or another of us rather say, "Lord, I would humbly intreat, with all due submission to thy superior wisdom and sovereign pleasure, that my child may live; but if it must be otherwise, *Not my will, but thine be done*†? I and mine are in thine hand, *Do with me*, and with them, *as seemeth good in thy sight*‡." And do we now blame ourselves for this? Would we unsay it again, and, if possible, take ourselves and our children out of his hands, whom we have so often owned as all-wise and all-gracious, and have chosen as our great guardian and theirs?

Let it farther be considered, it is done by that God who has accepted of this surrender, so as to undertake the administration of our affairs: "He is become my covenant God in Christ," may the christian say; "and, in consequence of that covenant, he hath engaged to manage the concerns and interests of his people so, that *All things shall work together for good to them that love him*§: and do I not love him? Answer, Oh my heart, dost thou not love thy God much better than all the blessings which earth can boast, or which the grave hath swallowed up? Wouldst thou resign thine interest in him to recover these precious spoils, to receive this dear child from the dust, a thousand times fairer and sweeter than before? Rather let death devour every remaining comfort, and leave me alone with him; with whom when I indeed am, I miss not the creatures, but rather rejoice in their absence, as I am then more intire with him whom my soul loveth. And if I do indeed love him, this promise is mine, and *all things*, and therefore this sad event in particular, *shall work together for my good.* Shall I not then say, *it is well?* What if it exceeded all the stretch of my thoughts, to conceive how it could, in any instance, be so? What are my narrow conceptions, that they should pretend to circumscribe infinite wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy? Let me rather, with *Abraham, give glory to God, and in hope believe against hope*‖."

Once more; let us consider how many invaluable blessings are given us by this covenant, and then judge whether we have not the utmost reason to acquiesce in such an event of providence. "If I am in covenant with God," may the believer say, then he

* Eccl. v. 2. † Matt. xxvi. 39. ‡ 2 Sam. xv. 26. § Rom. viii. 28. ‖ Rom. iv. 18, 20.

hath pardoned my sins, and renewed my heart, and hath made his blessed Spirit dwelling in me, the sacred bond of an everlasting union between him and my soul. He is leading me through the wilderness, and will, ere long, lead me out of it to the heavenly Canaan. And how far am I already arrived in my journey thither, now that I am come to the age of losing a child! And when God hath done all this for me, is he rashly to be suspected of unkindness? *He that spared not his own son* *, he that gave me with him his Spirit and his kingdom, why doth he deny, or why doth he remove, any other favour? Did he think the life of this child too great a good to grant, when he thought not Christ and glory too precious? Away with that thought, O my unbelieving heart, and with every thought which would derogate from such rich amazing grace, or would bring any thing in comparison with it. Art thou under these obligations to him, and wilt thou yet complain? With what grace, with what decency canst thou dispute this, or any other matter with thy God? *What right have I yet to cry any more to the king* †*?*" Would any of my brethren venture to say, What though I be a child of God, and an heir of glory, it matters not, for my gourd is withered; that pleasant plant which was opening so fair and so delightful, under the shadow of which I expected long to have sat, and even the rock of ages cannot shelter me so well? I can behold that beloved face no more, and therefore I will not look upward to behold the face of God, I will not look forward to Christ and to heaven?" Would this, my friends, be the language of a real christian? Nay, are there not many abandoned sinners who would tremble at such expressions? Yet is it not in effect the language of our tumultuous passions, when, like Rachel, we are *Mourning for our children, and will not be comforted, because they are not* ‡*?* Is it not our language while we cannot, like the pious Shunamite in the text, bring our afflicted hearts to say, *It is well?*

III. Pious parents, in such a circumstance, have farther reason to say, *It is well,*——as they may observe an apparent tendency in such a dispensation to teach them a variety of the most instructive and useful lessons, in a very convincing and effectual manner.

It is a just observation of Solomon, that *The rod and reproof give wisdom* §; and it is peculiarly applicable to such a chastisement of our heavenly Father. It should therefore be our great care to *Hear the rod and him that hath appointed it* ‖;

* Rom. viii. 32. † 2 Sam. xix. 28. ‡ Jer. xxxi. 15. § Prov. xxix. 15. ‖ Mic. vi. 9.

and so far as it hath a tendency to teach us our duty, and to improve the divine life in our souls, we have the highest reason to say, that *it is* indeed *well.*

Every affliction hath in its degree this kind of tendency, and it is the very reason for which *We are* thus *chastened,* that we may *profit* by our sorrows, and be made *partakers of God's holiness* *. But this dispensation is peculiarly adapted, in a very affecting manner—to teach us the vanity of the world,—to warn us of the approach of our own death, to quicken us in the duties incumbent upon us, especially to our surviving children,—and to produce a more intire resignation to the divine will, which is indeed the surest foundation of quiet, and source of happiness.

I shall insist a little more particularly on each of these; and I desire that it may be remembered, that the sight and knowledge of such mournful providences as are now before us, should, in some degree, be improved to these purposes, even by those parents whose families are most prosperous and joyful: may they learn wisdom and piety from what we suffer, and their improvements shall be acknowledged as an additional reason for us to say, *it is well.*

1. When God takes away our children from us, it is a very affecting lesson of the vanity of the world.

There is hardly a child born into it, on whom the parents do not look with some pleasing expectation that it shall *Comfort them concerning their labour* †. This makes the toil of education easy and delightful: and truly it is very early that we begin to find a sweetness in it, which abundantly repays all the fatigue. Five, or four, or three, or two years, make discoveries which afford immediate pleasure, and which suggest future hopes. Their words, their actions, their very looks touch us, if they be amiable and promising children, in a tender, but very powerful manner; their little arms twine about our hearts; and there is something more penetrating in their first broken accents of endearment, than in all the pomp and ornament of words. Every infant-year increases the pleasure, and nourishes the hope. And where is the parent so wise and so cautious, and so constantly intent on his journey to heaven, as not to measure back a few steps to earth again, on such a plausible and decent occasion, as that of introducing the young stranger into the amusements, nay perhaps, where circumstances will admit it, into the elegancies of life, as well as its more serious and important busi-

* Heb. xii. 10. † Gen. v. 29.

ness! What fond calculations do we form of what it will be, from what it is! How do we in thought open every blossom of sprightliness, or humanity, or piety, to its full spread, and ripen it to a sudden maturity! But, oh, who shall teach those that have never felt it, how it tears the very soul, when God roots up the tender plant with an inexorable hand, and withers the bud in which the colours were beginning to glow! Where is now our delight? Where is our hope? Is it in the coffin? Is it in the grave? Alas! all the loveliness of person, of genius, and of temper, serves but to point and to poison the arrow, which is drawn out of our own quiver to wound us. Vain, delusive, transitory joys! "And such, Oh my soul," will the christian say, "such are thine earthly comforts in every child, in every relative, in every possession of life; such are the objects of thy hopes, and thy fears, thy schemes, and thy labours, where earth alone is concerned. Let me then, once for all, direct mine eyes to another and a better state. From these *Broken cisterns*, the fragments of which may hurt me indeed, but can no longer refresh me, let me look to the *fountain of living waters* *. From these setting stars, or rather these bright but vanishing meteors, which make my darkness so much the more sensible, let me turn to the *Father of lights.* Oh *Lord, What wait I for? my hope is in thee* †, my sure abode, my everlasting confidence! My gourds wither, my children die; but *The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted* ‡ I see, in one instance more, the sad effects of having over-loved the creature; let me endeavour for the future, by the divine assistance, to fix my affections there where they cannot exceed; but where all the ardor of them will be as much my security and my happiness, as it is now my snare and my distress."

2. The removal of our children by such awful strokes may warn us of the approach of our own death.

Hereby God doth very sensibly shew us, and those around us, that *All flesh is as grass, and all the glory* and loveliness *of it like the flower of the field* §. And when our own habitations are made the houses of mourning, and ourselves the leaders of that sad procession, it may surely be expected that we should lay it to heart, so as to be quickened and improved by the view. "Have my children died in the morning of their days, and can I promise myself that I shall see the evening of mine? Now perhaps may I say, in a more literal sense than

* Jer. ii. 13. † Psal. xxxix. 7. ‡ Psal. xviii. 46. § 1 Pet. i. 24.

ever, *The graves are ready for me* *. One of my family, and some of us may add, the first-born of it, is gone as it were to take possession of the sepulchre in all our names; and ere long I shall lie down with my child in the same bed; yea, perhaps, many of the feet that followed it shall attend me thither. Our dust shortly shall be blended together; and who can tell but this providence might chiefly be intended as a warning blow to me, that these concluding days of my life might be more regular, more spiritual, and more useful than the former?"

3. The providence before us may be farther improved to quicken us in the duties of life, and especially in the education of surviving children.

It is, on the principles I hinted above, an engagement, that *Whatever our hand findeth to do, we should do it with all our might,* since it so plainly shews us that we are *going to the grave, where there is no device, nor knowledge, nor working* †: but permit me especially to observe, how peculiarly the sentiments we feel on these sad occasions, may be improved for the advantage of our dear offspring who yet remain, and quicken us to a proper care in their religious education.

We all see that it is a very reasonable duty, and every christian parent resolves that he will ere long apply himself to it; but I am afraid, great advantages are lost by a delay, which we think we can easily excuse. Our hands are full of a variety of affairs, and our children are yet very young: we are therefore ready to imagine it is a good husbandry of time to defer our attempts for their instruction to a more *Convenient season* ‡, when they may be able to learn more in an hour, than the labour of days could now teach them; besides that we are apprehensive of danger in over-loading their tender spirits, especially when they are perhaps under indisposition, and need to be diverted, rather than gravely advised and instructed.

But I beseech you, my friends, let us view the matter with that impartiality, which the eloquence of death hath a tendency to produce. "That lovely creature that God hath now taken away, though its days were few, though its faculties were weak, yet might it not have known a great deal more of religion than it did, and felt a great deal more of it too, had I faithfully and prudently done my part? How did it learn language so soon, and in such a compass and readiness? Not by multiplied rules, nor laboured instruction, but by conversation. And might it not have learned much more of divine things by conversation

* Job xvii. 1. † Eccl. ix. 10. ‡ Acts xxiv. 25.

too, if they had been allowed a due share in our thoughts and our discourses; according to the charge given to the Israelites, to *Talk of them going out and coming in, lying down and rising up* *? How soon did it learn trifles, and retain them, and after its little way, observe and reason upon them, perhaps with a vivacity that sometimes surprised me! And had I been as diligent as I ought, who can tell what progress it might have made in divine knowledge? Who can tell but, as a reward to these pious cares, God might have put a word into its dying lips, which I might all my life have recollected with pleasure, and *Out of its* feeble *mouth might have perfected praise* †?

My friends, let us humble ourselves deeply before God under a sense of our past neglects, and let us learn our future duty. We may perhaps be ready fondly to say, "Oh that it were possible my child could be restored to me again, though it were but for a few weeks or days! how diligently would I attempt to supply my former deficiencies!" Unprofitable wish! Yet may the thought be improved for the good of surviving children. How shall we express our affection to them? Not surely by indulging all the demands of appetite and fancy, in many early instances so hazardous, and so fatal; not by a solicitude to treasure up wealth for them, whose only portion may perhaps be a little coffin and shrowd. No; our truest kindness to them will be to endeavour, by divine grace, to form them to an early enquiry after God, and Christ, and heaven, and a love for real goodness in all the forms of it which may come within their observation and notice. Let us apply ourselves immediately to this task, as those that remember there is a double uncertainty, in their lives, and in ours. In a word, let us be that with regard to every child that yet remains, which we proposed and engaged to be to that which is taken away, when we pleaded with God for the continuance of its life, at least for a little while, that it might be farther assisted in the preparations for death and eternity. If such resolutions be formed and pursued, the death of one may be the means of spiritual life to many; and we shall surely have reason to say *it is well*, if it teach us so useful a lesson.

4. The providence before us may have a special tendency to improve our resignation to the divine will; and if it does so, it will indeed be *well*.

There is surely no imaginable situation of mind so sweet

* Deut. vi. 7. † Mat. xxi. 16.

and so reasonable, as that which we feel when we humbly refer ourselves in all things to the divine disposal, in an entire suspension of our own will, seeing and owning the hand of God, and bowing before it with a filial acquiescence. This is chiefly to be learned from suffering; and perhaps there is no suffering which is fitter to teach it, than this. In many other afflictions there is such a mixture of human interposition, that we are ready to imagine, we may be allowed to complain, and to chide a little. Indignation mingles itself with our grief; and when it does so, it warms the mind, though with a feverish kind of heat, and in an unnatural flow of spirits, leads the heart into a forgetfulness of God. But here it is so apparently his hand, that we must refer it to him, and it will appear bold impiety to quarrel at what is done. In other instances we can at least flatter ourselves with hope, that the calamity may be diverted, or the enjoyment recovered; but here alas! there is no hope. "Tears will not," as *Sir William Temple finely expresses it, "water the lovely plant so as to cause it to grow again; sighs will not give it new breath, nor can we furnish it with life and spirits by the waste of our own." The sentence is finally gone forth, and the last fatal stroke irrecoverably given. Opposition is vain; a forced submission gives but little rest to the mind; a cordial acquiescense in the divine will is the only thing in the whole world that can ease the labouring heart, and restore true serenity. Remaining corruption will work on such an occasion, and a painful struggle will convince the christian how imperfect his present attainments are; and this will probably lead him to an attentive review of the great reasons for submission; it will lead him to urge them on his own soul, and to plead them with God in prayer; till at length the storm is laid, and *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience a hope which maketh not ashamed*, while *the love of God is so shed abroad in the heart* †, as to humble it for every preceding opposition, and to bring it even to a real approbation of all that so wise and good a friend hath done; resigning every other interest and enjoyment to his disposal, and sitting down with the sweet resolution of the prophet, *Though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine, &c. yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation*‡. And when we are brought to this, the whole horizon clears, and the sun breaks forth in its strength.

Now I appeal to every sincere christian in this assembly,

* Temple's Essays, Vol. I. p. 178. † Rom. v. 3—5. ‡ Hab. iii. 17, 18.

whether there will not be reason indeed to say *it is well*, if by this painful affliction we more sensibly learn the vanity of the creature; if we are awakened to serious thoughts of our own latter end; if by it we are quickened in the duties of life, and formed to a more entire resignation of soul, and acquiescence in the divine will. I will only add one more, and it is a thought of delightful importance,

IV. That pious parents have reason to hope, *it is well* with those dear creatures who are taken away in their early days.

I see not that the word of God hath any where passed a damnatory sentence on any infants; and if it has not, I am sure we have no authority to do it; especially considering with how much compassion the Divine Being speaks of them in the instance of the *Ninevites* *, and on some other occasions. Perhaps, as some pious divines have conjectured, they may constitute a very considerable part of the number of the elect, and, *As in Adam* they *all died*, they may *in Christ all be made alive* †. At least, methinks, from the covenant which God made with *Abraham*, and his seed, *the blessings of which* are *come upon the* believing *Gentiles* ‡, there is reason to hope well concerning the infant offspring of God's people, early devoted, and often recommended to him, that their *souls will be bound in the bundle of life* §, and *Be loved for their parents' sakes* ‖.

It is, indeed, impossible for us to say, how soon children may be capable of contracting personal guilt. They are quickly able to distinguish, in some degree, between right and wrong; and it is too plain, that they as quickly, in many instances, forget the distinction. The corruptions of nature begin early to work, and shew the need of sanctifying grace; yet, without a miracle, it cannot be expected that much of the christian scheme should be understood by these little creatures, in the first dawning of reason, though a few evangelical phrases may be taught, and, sometimes, by a happy kind of accident, may be rightly applied. The tender heart of a parent may, perhaps, take a hint, from hence to terrify itself, and exasperate all its other sorrows, by that sad thought, "What if my dear child be perished for ever? gone from our embraces, and all the little pleasures we could give it, to everlasting darkness and pain?" Horrible imagination! and Satan may, perhaps, take the advantage of these gloomy moments, to aggravate every little infirmity into a

* Jonah iv. 11. † 1 Cor. xv. 22. ‡ Gal. iii. 14. § 1 Sam. xxv. 29. ‖ Rom. xi. 28.

crime, and throw us into an agony, which no other view of the affliction can possibly give to a soul penetrated with a sense of eternity. Nor do I know a thought, in the whole compass of nature, that hath a more powerful tendency to produce suspicious notions of God, and a secret alienation of heart from him.

Now for this very reason, methinks, we should guard against so harsh a conclusion, lest we, at once, injure the Divine Being, and torture ourselves. And surely, we may easily fall on some reflections which may encourage our hopes, where little children are concerned; and it is only of that case that I am now speaking. Let us think of the blessed God, as the great parent of universal nature; whose *Tender mercies are over all his works* *; who declares that judgment is *His strange work* †; who *Is very pitiful, and of tender mercy* ‡, *Gracious and full of compassion* §; who *Delighteth in mercy* ‖; who *Waiteth to be gracious* ¶; and *Endureth, with much long-suffering, even the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction* **. He intimately *Knows our frame* ††, and our circumstances; he sees the weakness of the unformed mind; how forcibly the volatile spirits are struck with a thousand new amusing objects around it, and borne away as a feather before the wind; and, on the other hand, how, when distempers seize it, the feeble powers are over-borne in a moment, and rendered incapable of any degree of application and attention. And, Lord, wilt thou *Open thine eyes on such a one, to bring it into* strict *judgment with thee* ‡‡? Amidst all the instances of thy patience, and thy bounty, to the most abandoned of mankind, are these little helpless creatures the objects of thy speedy vengeance, and final severity?

Let us farther consider, as it is a very comfortable thought in these circumstances, the compassionate regard which the blessed Jesus expressed to little children. He was *Much displeased* with those who forbad their being *brought to him; and said, suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God;* and *taking them up in his arms, he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them* §§. In another instance we are told, that he *Took a little child,* who appears to have been old enough to come at his call, *and set him in the midst of his disciples, and said, Except ye become as little children, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of hea-*

* Psal. cxlv. 9. † Isa. xxviii. 21. ‡ James v. 11. § Psal. cxi. 4.
‖ Mic. vii. 18. ¶ Isa. xxx. 18. ** Rom. ix. 22. †† Psal. ciii. 14.
‡‡ Job xiv. 3. §§ Mark x. 13—16.

*ven* *. May we not then hope that many little children are admitted into it? And may not that hope be greatly confirmed from whatever, of an amiable and regular disposition, we have observed in those that are taken away? If we have seen † a tenderness of conscience in any thing which they apprehended would displease the great and good God; a love to truth; a readiness to attend on divine worship, from some imperfect notion of its general design, though the particulars of it could not be understood; an open, candid, benevolent heart; a tender sense of obligation, and a desire, according to their little power, to repay it; may we not hope that these were some of the *First-fruits of the Spirit* ‡, which he would, in due time, have ripened into christian graces, and are now, on a sudden, perfected by that great Almighty Agent *Who worketh all, and in all* §?

Sure I am, that this blessed Spirit hath no inconsiderable work to perform on the most established christians, to finish them to a complete meetness for the heavenly world: would to God, there were no greater blemishes to be observed in their character, than the little vanities of children! With infinite ease then can he perfect what is lacking in their unfinished minds, and pour out upon them, in a moment, that light and grace, which shall qualify them for a state, in comparison of which, ours on earth is but childhood or infancy.

Now what a noble source of consolation is here! Then may the affectionate parent say, "*It is well*, not only with me, but *with the child* too: incomparably better than if my ardent wishes, and importunate prayers for its recovery, had been answered. *It is* indeed *well*, if that beloved creature be *Fallen asleep in Christ* ‖; if that dear lamb be folded in the arms of the compassionate Shepherd, and gathered into his gracious bosom. Self-love might have led me to wish its longer continuance here; but if I truly loved my child with a solid, rational affection, I should much rather *Rejoice* to think *it is gone to* a heavenly *Father* ¶, and to the world of perfected Spirits above. Had it been spared to me, how slowly could I have taught it! and in the full ripeness of its age, what had it been, when compared with what it now is! How is it shot up on a sudden, from the converse and the toys of children, to be a companion with saints and angels, in the

* Mat. xviii. 2, 3.

† I bless God, all these things were very evident in that dear child, whose death occasioned this discourse.

‡ Rom. viii. 23. § 1 Cor. xii. 6. ‖ 1 Cor. xv. 18. ¶ John xiv. 28.

employment, and the blessedness of heaven! Shall I then complain of it as a rigorous severity to my family, that God hath taken it to the family above? And what if he hath chosen to bestow the distinguished favour on that one of my little flock, who was formed to take the tenderest hold of my heart? Was their unkindness in that? What if he saw, that the very sprightliness and softness which made it to me so exquisitely delightful, might, in time, have betrayed it into ruin; and took this method of sheltering it from trials which had, otherwise, been too hard for it, and so fixing a seal on its character and happiness? What if that strong attachment of my heart to it, had been a snare to the child, and to me? Or what if it had been otherwise? Do I need additional reasons to justify the divine conduct, in an instance which my child is celebrating in the songs of heaven? If it is a new and untasted affliction to have such a tender branch lopped off, it is also a new honour to be the parent of a glorified saint." And, as good Mr. Howe expressed it on another occasion, "If God be pleased, and his glorified creature be pleased, who are we that we should be displeased *?"

Could I wish, that this young inhabitant of heaven should be degraded to earth again? Or would it thank me for that wish? Would it say, that it was the part of a wise parent, to call it down from a sphere of such exalted services and pleasures, to our low life here upon earth? Let me rather be thankful for the pleasing hope, that though God loves my child too well to permit it to return to me, he will ere long bring me to it. And then that endeared paternal affection, which would have been a cord to tie me to earth, and have added new pangs to my removal from it, will be as a golden chain to draw me upwards, and add one farther charm and joy even to paradise itself." And oh, how great a joy! to view the change, and to compare that dear idea, so fondly laid up, so often reviewed, with the now glorious original, in the improvements of the upper world! To borrow the words of the sacred writer, in a very different sense!" "*I said, I was desolate and bereaved of children, and who hath brought up these? I was left alone, and these where have they been* † *?* Was this my desolation? this my sorrow? to part with thee for a few days, *That I might receive thee for ever* ‡, and find thee what thou art?" It is for no language, but that of heaven, to describe the sacred joy which such a meeting must occasion.

* Howe's Life, p. 32. Fol. Edit. † Isa. xlix. 21. ‡ Philem. ver. 15.

In the mean time, christians, let us keep up the lively expectation of it, and let what has befallen us draw our thoughts upwards. Perhaps they will sometimes, before we are aware, sink to the grave, and dwell in the tombs that contain the poor remains of what was once so dear to us. But let them take flight from thence to more noble, more delightful scenes. And I will add, let the hope we have of the happiness of our children render God still dearer to our souls. We feel a very tender sense of the kindness which our friends expressed towards them, and think, indeed very justly, that their affectionate care for them lays a lasting obligation upon us. What love then, and what service do we owe to thee, oh gracious Father, who hast, we hope, received them into thine house above, and art now entertaining them there with unknown delight, though our former methods of commerce with them be cut off! Lord, "should each of us say in such a case," I would take what thou art doing to my child as done to myself, and as a specimen and earnest of what shall shortly be done." *It is* therefore *well.*

It only remains, that I conclude with a few hints of farther improvement.

1. Let pious parents, who have lost hopeful children in a maturer age, join with others in saying, *It is well.*

My friends, the reasons which I have been urging at large, are common to you with us; and permit me to add, that as your case has its peculiar distress, it has, I think, in a yet greater degree, its peculiar consolations too.

I know you will say, that it is inexpressibly grievous and painful, to part with children who were grown up into most amiable friends, who were your companions in the ways of God, and concerning whom you had a most agreeable prospect, that they would have been the ornaments and supports of religion in the rising age, and extensive blessings to the world, long after you had quitted it. These reasonings have, undoubtedly, their weight; and they have so, when considered in a very different view. Must you not acknowledge *it is well*, that you enjoyed so many years of comfort in them? that you reaped so much solid satisfaction from them? and saw those evidences of a work of grace upon their hearts, which give you such abundant reason to conclude that they are now received into that inheritance of glory, for which they were so apparently made meet? Some of them, perhaps, had already quitted their father's house: as for others, had God spared their lives, they might have been transplanted into families of their own: and if, instead of being removed to another house, or town, or

country, they are taken by God into another world, is that a matter of so great complaint; when that world is so much better, and you are yourselves so near it? I put it to your hearts, christians, would you rather have chosen to have buried them in their infancy, or never to have known the joys and the hopes of a parent, now you know the vicissitude of sorrow, and of disappointment? But perhaps, you will say, that you chiefly grieve for that loss which the world has sustained by the removal of those, from whom it might reasonably have expected so much future service. This is, indeed, a generous and a christian sentiment, and there is something noble in those tears which flow on such a consideration. But do not so remember your relation to earth, as to forget that which you bear to heaven; and do not so wrong the divine wisdom and goodness, as to suppose, that when he takes away from hence promising instruments of service, he there lays them by as useless. Much more reasonable is it to conclude, that their sphere of action, as well as happiness, is enlarged, and that the church above hath gained incomparably more, than that below can be supposed to have lost by their death.

On the whole, therefore, far from complaining of the divine conduct in this respect, it will become you, my friends, rather to be very thankful that these dear children were spared so long, to accompany and entertain you in so many stages of your short journey through life, to answer so many of your hopes, and to establish so many more beyond all fear of disappointment. Reflect on all that God did in and upon them, on all he was beginning to do by them, and on what you have great reason to believe he is now doing for them; and adore his name, that he has left you these dear memorials, by which your case is so happily distinguished from ours, whose hopes in our children withered in the very bud; or from theirs, who saw those who were once so dear to them, perishing, as they have cause to fear, in the paths of the destroyer.

But while I speak thus, methinks I am alarmed, lest I should awaken the far more grievous sorrows of some mournful parent, whom it will not be so easy to comfort. My brethren and friends, what shall I say to you, who are lamenting over your Absaloms, and almost wishing *You had died for them*?* Shall I urge you to say *it is well?* Perhaps you may think it a great attainment, if like Aaron, when his sons *Died before the Lord*, you *can hold your peace* †, under the awful stroke. My soul is troubled for

* 2 Sam. xviii. 33. † Lev. x. 3.

you; *my words are* almost *swallowed up.* I cannot unsay what I have elsewhere said at large on that melancholy subject *. Yet let me remind you of this, that you do not certainly know what almighty grace might do for these lamented creatures, even in the latest moments, and have therefore no warrant confidently to pronounce that they are assuredly perished. And if you cannot but tremble in the too probable fear of it, labour to turn your eyes from so dark a prospect, to those better hopes which God is setting before you. For surely you still have abundant reason to rejoice in that grace, which gives your own lives to you as a prey, and has brought you so near to that blessed world, where, hard as it is now to conceive it, you will have laid aside every affection of nature, which interferes with the interests of God, and prevents your most cheerful acquiescence in every particular of his wise and gracious determinations.

2. From what we have heard, let us learn not to think of the loss of our children with a slavish dread.

It is to a parent indeed such a cutting stroke, that I wonder not if nature shrink back at the very mention of it: and, perhaps, it would make those to whom God hath denied children more easy, if they knew what some of the happiest parents feel in an uncertain apprehension of the loss of theirs: an apprehension which strikes with peculiar force on the mind, when experience hath taught us the anguish of such an affliction in former instances. But let us not anticipate evils: perhaps all our children, who are hitherto spared, may follow us to the grave: or, if otherwise, we *Sorrow not as those who have no hope* †. We may have reason still to say, *it is well;* and, through divine grace, we may also have hearts to say it. Whatever we lose, if we be the children of God, we shall never lose our heavenly Father. He will still be our support, and our joy. And therefore let us turn all our anxiety about uncertain, future events, into an holy solicitude to please him, and to promote religious impressions in the hearts of our dear offspring; that if God should see fit to take them away, we may have a claim to the full consolations, which I have been representing in the preceding discourse.

3. Let us not sink in hopeless sorrow, or break out into clamorous complaints, if God has brought this heavy affliction upon us.

A stupid indifference would be absurd and unnatural: God

* In the sixth of my sermons to young persons, entitled, The Reflections of a pious Parent on the Death of a wicked Child.

† 1 Thess. iv. 13.

and man might look upon us as acting a most unworthy part, should we be like the *Ostrich in the wilderness, which hardeneth herself against her young ones, as if they were not hers; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding* *. Let us sorrow like men, and like parents; but let us not, in the mean time, forget that we are christians. Let us remember how common the calamity is; few parents are exempt from it; some of the most pious and excellent have lost amiable children, with circumstances perhaps of peculiar aggravation. It is a trial which God hath chosen for the exercise of some who have been eminently dear to him, as we may learn from a variety of instances both ancient and modern. Let us recollect our many offences against our heavenly Father, those sins which such a dispensation may properly *Bring to our remembrance* †; and let that silence us, and teach us to own, that *It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed* ‡, and that we are *Punished less than our iniquities deserve* §. Let us look round on our surviving comforts; let us look forward to our future, our eternal hopes; and we shall surely see, that there is still room for praise, still a call for it. Let us review the particulars mentioned above, and then let conscience determine whether it doth not become us, in this particular instance, to say it steadily, and cheerfully too, even *this is well.* And may the God of all grace and comfort apply these considerations to our mind, that we may not only own them, but feel them, as a reviving cordial when our heart is overwhelmed within us! In the mean time, let me beseech you whose *Tabernacles are in peace* ‖, and whose *Children are yet about you* ¶, that you would not be severe in censuring our tears, till you have experimentally known our sorrows, and yourselves tasted the *Wormwood and the gall,* which we, with all our comforts, must have in a long and bitter *remembrance* **.

4. Let those of us who are under the rod, be very solicitous to improve it aright, that in the end *it* may indeed be *well.*

Hear, my brethren, my friends and fellow-sufferers, hear and *Suffer the word of exhortation* ††. Let us be much concerned, that we may not bear all the smart of such an affliction, and, through our own folly, lose all that benefit which might, otherwise, be a rich equivalent. In proportion to the grievousness of the stroke, should be our care to attend to the design of it. Let us, now God is calling us to mourning and lamentation, be

* Job xxxix. 16, 17. † 1 Kings xvii. 18. ‡ Lam. iii. 22. § Ezra ix. 13.
‖ Job v. 24. ¶ Job xxix. 5. ** Lam. iii. 19, 20. †† Heb. xiii. 22.

*Searching and trying our ways, that we may turn again unto the Lord**. Let us review the conduct of our lives, and the state and tenour of our affections, that we may observe what hath been deficient, and what irregular; that proper remedies may be applied, and those important lessons more thoroughly learnt, which I was mentioning under the former branch of my discourse. Let us pray, that through our tears we may read our duty, and that by the heat of the furnace we may be so melted, that our dross may be purged away, and the divine image instamped on our souls in brighter and fairer characters. To sum up all in one word, let us endeavour to set our hearts more on that God, who is infinitely *Better to us than ten children*†, who hath *Given us a name better than that of sons and daughters*‡, and can abundantly supply the place of all earthly enjoyments with the rich communications of his grace: nay, perhaps, we may add, who hath removed some darling of our hearts, lest to our infinite detriment it should fill his place there, and, by alienating us from his love and service, have a fatal influence on our present peace, and our future happiness.

Eternal glory, my friends, is so great a thing, and the complete love and enjoyment of God so unutterably desirable, that it is well worth our while to bear the sharpest sorrows, by which we may be more perfectly formed for it. We may even congratulate the death of our children, if it bring us nearer to our heavenly Father; and teach us, (instead of filling this vacancy in our heart with some new vanity, which may shortly renew our sorrows) to consecrate the whole of it to him who alone deserves, and can alone answer the most intense affection. Let us try what of this kind may be done. We are now going to the table of the Lord §, to that very table where our vows have often been sealed, where our comforts have often been resigned, where our Isaacs have been conditionally sacrificed, and where we commemorate the real sacrifice which God hath made even of his only begotten Son for us. May our other sorrows be suspended, while we *Mourn for him whom we have pierced, as for an only son, and are in bitterness as for a first-born*‖. From his blood consolations spring up, which will flourish even on the graves of our dear children; and the sweetness of that cup which he there gives us, will temper the most distasteful ingre-

* Lam. iii. 40. † 1 Sam. i. 8. ‡ Isa. lvi. 5.

§ N. B. This sermon was preached October 3, 1736, it being sacrament day. The child died October 1.

‖ Zech. xii. 10.

dients of the other. *Our houses are not so with God*, as they once were, as we once expected they would have been, *but he hath made with us an everlasting covenant*, and these are the tokens of it. Blessed be his name, we hold not the mercies of that covenant by so precarious a tenure as the life of any creature: *It is well ordered in all things and sure:* may *it be all our salvation, and all our desire*;* and then it is but a little while, and all our complaints will cease. *God will wipe away these tears from our eyes†;* our peaceful and happy spirits shall ere long meet with those of our children which he hath taken to himself. Our bodies shall sleep, and ere long shall also awake, and arise with theirs. *Death*, that inexorable destroyer, *shall be swallowed up in victory‡*, while we and ours surround the throne with everlasting hallelujahs, and own, with another evidence than we can now perceive, with another spirit than we can now express, that *all was indeed well.* Amen.

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. † Rev. xxi. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 54.

# SERMON III.

## PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS

ON THE

## CHARACTER AND TRANSLATION OF ENOCH,

*In a Sermon preached at Welford, in Northamptonshire, March 9, 1737-8, on Occasion of the much lamented Death of the late Reverend Mr. John Norris.*

Gen. v. 24.—*And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.*

THE apostle gives it in charge to the believing Hebrews, that they should *Remember those who had presided over them, and had spoken* to them *the word of the gospel*, well knowing it would be one sweet and powerful engagement, to *follow their faith*, especially when they *considered the end of their conversation* *.

I persuade myself, that it will be a very easy matter for you, my friends, to remember that dear and faithful servant of Christ, who, for so many years † had the pastoral care of you, guiding you, at once, in the *integrity of his heart, and in the skilfulness of his hands* ‡. You who have grown up, and as to some I may add, have grown old too under his ministry, will surely find the recollection, notwithstanding all the sorrow that must now attend it, both too edifying and too delightful to be neglected. You must, no doubt, find some memorials of him, in various places and circumstances of life; but none more numerous, and none more pleasing than your bibles will afford you. How many awakening exhortations, how many comprehensive precepts, how many precious promises

* Heb. xiii. 7.

† N. B. Mr. Norris died Feb. 8, 1737-8, in the 63d year of his age, having been near 38 years Minister at Welford.

‡ Psal. lxxviii. 72.

have you, from sabbath to sabbath, heard him unfold? How many instructive and amiable examples have you not only heard, but seen him illustrate! It was the care and joy of his life, to form himself on those great models; and beholding them in the glass of scripture, he was *changed into the same image.* In those originals therefore you will often trace him, and in which of them is not the resemblance beautifully conspicuous? Yet perhaps in few of the miniatures which are there drawn, it is more remarkably so, than in the account given of Enoch. *He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.* As soon as you heard me read the words, you with pleasure saw how well they expressed both the distinguished piety of your late minister's character, and the ease and suddenness of his removal from us.

It is impossible for me to express the tender sympathy, with which I undertake this melancholy office, which my honoured father was pleased to assign me. But I will attempt to break through the difficulty, and to suppress the fulness of my heart, so far as it would obstruct what I have to say, in humble hope, that, through the divine blessing, that which was the great end of his life and labours among you, may in some measure be promoted by this discourse, occasioned by his death. And, I am persuaded, nothing will so nobly support your hearts under this sad separation, or so effectually secure and promote the pleasure of your future meeting with him, as a diligent care to be followers of him, as he was a follower of Enoch, and all the saints in that holy course of walking with God, which is now to be the subject of our meditation. And that you may be both directed and animated in it, we will,

*First*, Explain the view given us of Enoch's life and character. *He walked with God.*

*Secondly*, Consider the happy close of this pious course. *He was not, for God took him.*

When I have handled these heads as fully as the time will admit, I shall,

*Thirdly*, Conclude with some practical reflections, and an address peculiarly suited to that awful providence, which hath brought me among you this day.

And, permit me to remind you, that your serious attention to what shall now be spoken, is one part of the respect which you owe to the memory of that worthy and excellent man, in whose place I stand.

*First*, Let us attentively survey the account which is here given us, of the life and character of Enoch.

It is said, that he *walked with God;* a phrase which the same sacred historian useth concerning one of Enoch's descendants, i. e. Noah. He was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and *Noah walked with God* :* and when it is said of other good men, that they walked *before the Lord*, it seems to be an expression much of the same import, and implies, that in the main series of their lives they maintained a firm persuasion of the being and perfections of God, and of the other important principles of religion ; and that in consequence of this they were careful to behave as in the divine presence ; and on the other hand, that they were honoured with some gracious and comfortable tokens of the divine acceptance and favour: in a word, that there was a mutual friendship established and exercised between God and them. Blessed character, and happy state! May we be formed to it, and improved in it, while we more particularly review it in this instance of Enoch,

1. When it is said that Enoch walked with God, it evidently implies, that he had a firm persuasion of the Divine Being and perfections, and the other important principles of true religion.

Of this the apostle expressly assures us, and argues it from the account here given of him. *He had before his translation this testimony, that he pleased God ; but without faith it is impossible to please him ; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him* †.

Enoch had undoubtedly this faith, by which he believed, that the worlds were made by God, and that he is the great supporter of all. He certainly traced him in his works of creation and providence, and considered him both as the greatest and the best of beings. He was firmly persuaded of his immutable existence, his almighty power, and unsearchable wisdom ; and he also considered him as the wise, the righteous, and gracious governor of his rational creatures ; the Father, the guide, and the portion of his people. Without these reverential and these fiducial regards, what foundation or what encouragement could there have been for his walking with God ?

On these principles Enoch would easily infer the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments ; considering how little the present administrations of providence bear the face of a final retribution. We are also assured by St. Jude, that he, by divine revelation, prophecied of the judgment day ‡, and

* Gen. vi. 9. † Heb. xi. 5, 6. ‡ Jude 14.

may from that hint probably conjecture, that other important articles of religion might in such an extraordinary way be discovered to him. We may especially conclude, that being thus divinely instructed in the certainty and pomp of Christ's second coming, he was not left entirely ignorant of the purposes of his first appearance. And no doubt, Adam, who was for the last 300 years of his life, contemporary with Enoch, would not fail to acquaint him with that first important promise relating to the *Seed of the woman* *, as the noblest support to the hopes of a guilty creature.

It is indeed impossible for us to determine, how far his views of the Messiah reached ; but it is highly congruous to the rest of his character, to conclude, that he traced every intimation of this glorious deliverer with pleasure, and joyfully accepted him so far, as he was made known, as the great medium of his reconciliation to God, and converse with him.

2. In consequence of this persuasion of the great truths of religion, Enoch made it his care to behave as in the divine presence.

He walked with God, i. e. he habitually conducted himself as one that was with God. And as it is said of Moses, *He endured* and acted *as seeing him who is invisible* †. It may be worth our while, more particularly to consider, how this would influence his secret, his domestic, and his public conduct.

We may assure ourselves, that it had a great influence upon him in secret, not only to restrain him from secret sins, but to excite him to the discharge of those secret duties, which a present deity so reasonably requires, and which they that have a suitable sense of his presence cannot omit. This certainly led him to spend many an hour in devout retirement, meditation and prayer : and we may reasonably conclude, that the good man was never less alone than when he was alone. He probably never made nearer approaches to heaven, before his translation thither, than when he had got rid of other cares, other amusements and other company ; that he might be all at leisure for his God.

It is also very evident, that this sense of the divine presence, must have influenced Enoch in his domestic life. Short as the Mosaic history of this holy man is, we learn from it, that he was the master of a family, and stood in the relation of a husband and a parent ; and which is something remarkable, we do not find that any of the patriarchs married younger than he ;

* Gen. iii. 15. † Heb. xi. 27.

for his son Methuselah was born in the 65th year; which, considering the age of men in the antediluvian world, must be the bloom of his father's youth. With this family he lived 300 years, governing himself, no doubt, by a resolution like that of pious Joshua, *That he and his house would serve the Lord* *. His care would be like that of Abraham in after-ages, *To command his household after him to keep the way of the Lord.*

He would probably often call them together to join in sacrifice and prayer; when perhaps his children, as we read of Job's, were remembered, *according to the number of them all.* He could not but be solicitous to *Train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* †, that they might learn to *Know the God of their fathers, and be inclined to serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind* ‡.

And he would be sure to enforce all his precepts by a good example. A soul so habitually near to God, and so constantly sensible of his presence, must be open to all the tenderest sentiments of humanity and benevolence. He would, of course, study to make every body about him easy and happy, and, like your venerable and beloved pastor now with God, would wear a constant smile on his countenance, which he probably saw reflected from the face of every child and servant in the family. Happy were they that resided in it, for surely they might have continued there from one century to another with growing improvement and delight.

And could we have traced Enoch into public life, we should undoubtedly have found that part of his character agreeable to the rest. Like Jesus, *He went about doing good* §, his head still full of wise schemes, and his heart overflowing with benevolent affections; so that whatever advantages his rank and circumstances gave him, were faithfully employed for the common good. We may conclude, that such a person was *Approved by men, as well as accepted of God* ‖, that *When the eye saw him, it blessed him; and when the ear heard him, it gave witness to him* ¶.

There is great reason to believe, that his lips as well as his hands fed many; and so much the rather as he was a prophet commissioned by God to teach the people, and to bring them some extraordinary revelations from him. Thus we read in words which I hinted at above, that *Enoch the seventh from*

* Josh. xxiv. 15. † Eph. vi. 4. ‡ 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. § Acts x. 38.
‖ Rom. xiv. 18. ¶ Job xxix. 11.

*Adam, prophecied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints,* or holy ones, *to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have* impiously *committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him* *. From whence it plainly appears, that he lived in a very degenerate age, when impiety and immorality abounded, when insolent sinners, as in our days, *Set their mouths against the heavens*, and gave *their tongues* an unbridled licence of *walking through the earth* †. But he bore his undaunted testimonies to the truth of God in the midst of all their opposition and contempt. He resolutely *Set his face like a flint*, as he well *knew that* in such a cause *he should never be ashamed* §. His heart, humane and tender as it was, could not but be warmed with a generous indignation at the dishonours which were done to the divine Majesty, and *Knowing the terrors of the Lord*, he endeavoured to *persuade men* §. We would hope his endeavours were not entirely in vain, but that through the concurrence of divine grace, he was the happy instrument of stemming the torrent for a while, or at least of recovering and preserving a few, who might be the companions of his walk with God here, and are now his associates in glory.

Such a governing care to approve the main series of his private, domestic, and public conduct to the Being in whose presence he always knew himself to be, must surely be comprehended in the phrase before us; and it will be pleasant to consider,

3. That the expression farther intimates his being honoured with correspondent tokens of the divine acceptance and favour.

Enoch *walked with God*, and *Can two walk together, except they be agreed* ‖ *?* It plainly implies, that he lived in a state of friendship with God; or as the apostle expresseth it, even before his translation, had a *Testimony that he pleased him. Thou meetest*, saith the prophet, *him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, even such as remember thee in their ways* ¶. Thus did Enoch remember God, and thus was he visited by him. *The high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity, who dwelleth in the high and the holy place*, condescended to *dwell with* this holy man, as he was *humble, and of a contrite spirit* **.

Public assemblies for divine worship were, no doubt, seasons of delightful converse with God; and Enoch would, on

* Jude 14, 15. † Psal. lxxiii. 9. ‡ Isa. l. 7. § 2 Cor. v. 11.
‖ Amos iii. 3. ¶ Isa. lxiv. 5. ** Isa. lvii. 15.

that account, honour and love them, whoever might forsake them, whoever might despise them. And in his house and his retirements, his journeys, and his converse with his friends, he had God still with him. *He walked in the light of God's countenance*, and was surely looking up often in a day, often in an hour, and saw by faith the most delightful sight on this side heaven, or even in heaven itself, the smiling face of a reconciled God and Father. He felt the gentle elapses of the *Divine love shed abroad on his heart by the spirit given unto him* *, which, no doubt, though under a darker dispensation, *Witnessed with his spirit, that he was a child of God* †, and an heir of eternal glory.

As piety was the source of all his social and personal virtues, the fragrancy of it, as a sacred perfume, would mingle itself delightfully with all his social and personal enjoyments, and heighten them to a degree unknown to those who have not thus tasted the joys which a stranger intermeddleth not with. In every advantageous circumstance of life he saw and observed the hand of the divine bounty, and discerning also the interposition of the same providence in all his afflictions, for afflictions he undoubtedly had, he not only submitted to them in humble silence, but cordially acquiesced in them all, as the means which infinite wisdom and goodness had chosen to carry on his own kind designs, for his final everlasting happiness.

And such universally are the ways, and such the supports and pleasures of those that walk with God. *Happy the men that are in such a case; yea happy the men whose God is the Lord* ‡; happy they by whom he is thus constantly owned and regarded, honoured and enjoyed. I persuade myself, that after such a description, I need not insist largely on the dignity, the security and the delights of such a life, especially as it is to be the business of my second general head.

*Secondly*, To consider the happy close of this pious course. *He was not, for God took him.*

For the farther illustration of which, you will observe,—— That he was early and suddenly removed from our world.—— That he was taken to dwell with God.——And that he was received to that happy state in a miraculous and unparalleled way. All these particulars evidently appear from the account which Moses gives of this important fact, as illustrated by the writers of the New Testament.

* Rom. v. 5. † Rom. viii. 16. ‡ Psal. cxliv. 15.

1. Enoch was early and suddenly removed from our world. *He was not.* i. e. He was no longer here. You may perhaps wonder that I should speak of his early remove, when you recollect that he was then 365 years old. But you will not blame the expression, when you consider the long lives of men in those antediluvian ages, to which this period bore but a small proportion. As his son Methuselah lived 969 years, so his father Jared attained to 962 years; and therefore, being 162 years old at his birth, continued in the world 435 years after Enoch had left it; whose age at the time of his translation answered to about the 31st or 32d year of life at present, which you know is just the vigour and prime of it. But he had undoubtedly lived much in a little time, and had done more for God before he had reached what was then accounted the meridian of life, than many who had out-stripped him in age by several centuries. On this a gracious God excused him from the trouble of passing through a longer pilgrimage, and of drooping under the burden of declining years. And sure so wise and good a man would have been thankful for the favour, though it had not been bestowed in so extraordinary a way; especially as this removal was not only early but sudden too.

This suddenness the words do beautifully express, *He was not*, i. e. he disappeared at once, as riches sometimes do when they *Take their wings, and fly away, as an eagle towards heaven.* On which account they are called *Things that are not* *; the apostle renders it *He was not found* †; perhaps intimating, that some diligent search was made after him, as after Elijah, when in a very distant succeeding age he was in an extraordinary manner received into glory.

Let us pause a little on this delightful thought. What a sudden transition this good man had from earth to heaven! *He was not, for God took him:* he probably rose in the morning in perfect health, and went forth with his usual composure and sweetness of temper to the appointed duties of the day. And while he was perhaps conversing with his pious friends, which was the case with Elijah, or while, like Christ, he was praying with and for them, or engaged in some other act of social worship, he was suddenly called away. No tedious illness, no sad farewel to those that were at home. This happy man was in the way of his duty one moment, and in the regions of immortality the next. *He was not, for God took him;* which farther implies,

* Prov. xxiii. 5. † Heb. xi. 5.

2. That *He was taken to dwell with God.*

He had walked with him in this *house of his pilgrimage*, yet still his faith and hope had been waiting for a more noble and more perfect state, and that *hope did not make him ashamed. Having guided him by his counsels, God received him to glory.* And this was to him the crown of all his honour and joy, that he was received to God. Divine grace had long since taught him to say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee**: and God treated him as a friend that loved him, and was beloved by him. As if he had not been satisfied with visiting him below, he called him to dwell above. *He shewed him the path of life, and conducted him to his presence, where there is fullness of joy; and to his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore* †.

And that holy soul, which had been trained up for heaven by so long a course of devotion and virtue, would find itself most happily attempered and connaturalized to the world to which it was received. He changed his place indeed, but his employments and pleasures were in the main the same. He still *walked with God*, but with a steadier pace, more unwearied ardor, and more exquisite delight. How gladly would he have obeyed this divine call to that world, though death in its most dreadful forms had stood to meet him in his passage thither. But through the peculiar favour of God to him, we are informed,

3. That he was received to this happiness in a miraculous, and till that time an unparalleled way.

For his sake God was pleased to create a new thing on the earth, and to permit a child of Adam to enter the gates of his glory, without taking the road appointed to the best of men in the course of nature, in passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

I cannot say that we could with any certainty have inferred this from the words of Moses alone. *He was not, for God took him.* That phrase might have been interpreted of a sudden death: as Rachel is said to lament, because *Her children were not* ‡. And Job expressed his apprehension of immediate death, by saying, *Thou shalt seek me in the morning, and I shall not be* §. Now had Enoch passed out of life thus, it might have been said that *God took him*, as Asaph speaks of being *Received into glory* ‖. And our Lord promises his apostles, who were to go the way of all flesh, that he would *Come and receive them to*

* Psal. lxxiii. 25. † Psal. xvi. 11. ‡ Mat. ii. 18. § Job vii. 21. ‖ Psal. lxxiii. 24.

*himself* *. But St. Paul, who was guided by an unerring Spirit, which would sufficiently secure him from being imposed upon by any fanciful comment, or precarious tradition, has fixed the matter beyond all reasonable doubt, by saying, that *Through faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him* †.

This was a case hitherto unequalled, nor hath the like happened even to the present day, excepting only the rapture of Elijah, and the ascension of Christ.

We are at large told in the book of Kings‡, that the pious Elijah, who like Enoch had signalized his zeal for God in a very degenerate age, was favoured with an extraordinary remove like his. He was fetched up to heaven by a detachment of angels, who brought along with them a splendid vehicle, which is called a chariot of fire prepared for that purpose, and which might possibly by some unknown operation be the means of purifying and refining the mortal part of his nature§, to such a degree as was necessary in order to its inhabiting that kingdom of God which *Flesh and blood cannot enter, and which corruption cannot inherit* ‖.

I speak also of the ascension of our blessed Redeemer, as a parallel instance, because, though he died, yet he rose again from the dead, and continued a while upon earth, eating and drinking, and travelling from place to place, as he had done in the days of his flesh; so that his flight to the regions of glory was as miraculous, and might as properly be called a translation, as if he had not died at all.

And in this respect the saints which are found *alive* at the general judgment, shall be conformed to these great examples. For we are expressly told by St. Paul, who mentions it as a mystery till then kept secret, and now but imperfectly revealed, that *We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye* ¶. And he illustrates it, when he tells the Thessalonians, that after the resurrection of those that *Sleep in Jesus, they who are alive shall be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*, in order to our *being for ever with him* **. Words with which we may justly

* John xiv. 3. † Heb. xi. 5. ‡ 2 Kings ii.

§ ——— Corpus mortale per auras
Dilapsum tenues: ceu latâ plumbea fundâ
Missa solet medio glans intabescere cœlo.
Pulchra subit facies.——Ovid. Met. Lib. xiv. v. 824, &c.

‖ 1 Cor. xv. 50. ¶ 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. ** 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

comfort ourselves, and each other, for those consolations of God are not small.

And it is exceeding probable this would have been the stated manner of passing from earth to heaven, had not sin made its fatal inroads upon us, and death entered in its train. For nothing can be more certain than that, had not the increasing numbers of mankind been one way or another thinned and diminished, earth would several thousand years ago have been too small to nourish, or even to receive its inhabitants.

It would be great presumption in me to pretend to describe the change made in the body of Enoch, by this translation, or to give an account of the circumstances that attended it; since the sacred historian hath not thought fit to record them. I will not pretend to say how much reason a learned and ingenious writer of our own * might have to conjecture, that all the antediluvian patriarchs whom Moses mentions, except Adam, who was now dead, and Noah not yet born, might be assembled, perhaps with multitudes more, to see this great sight; yet I cannot think it passed without any witness at all. When Elijah was to be taken up, it is very evident, that not only he himself had some intimations of the time and manner, but that it was divinely revealed to the prophets of Bethel and Jericho, as well as that Elisha was permitted to be an eye-witness of it. And when Christ ascended, it was in the presence of all the apostles, while he *Spake with them, and they beheld, and looked stedfastly upon him* †. And there is the greater reason to believe that something like this might be the case with Enoch, because his translation might probably be intended to answer many valuable and important purposes, which required at least some competent number of witnesses, if not a large and public assembly.

So far as this important fact was known, it would be the most glorious testimony the world had ever received of God's regard to singular and distinguished piety. His permitting righteous Abel to fall by the hand of his cruel and wicked brother, might have been a *stone of stumbling*, and a *rock of offence*, and that career of prosperous tyranny and violence, with which the giants of those ages were then filling the earth, might have tempted men to suspect that the *Lord had forsaken it*. This no doubt emboldened *ungodly sinners* in their *hard* and impious *speeches*, as well as their *ungodly deeds*. But when Enoch, that holy prophet, who had so long been the object of their profane mockery and derision, was thus singled out from the whole race

* Dr. Hunt, of Div. Rev. p. 43. † Acts i. 9, 10.

of men, as the friend of God, and taken to dwell with him, it would evidently appear, there was a *Reward for the righteous, and a God who judged in the earth* *.

It would also be a sensible demonstration of the reality of an invisible world, and would, by a train of easy consequences, confirm men's natural apprehensions of the immortality of the soul, and of the existence of some nobler orders of beings in the upper world, with whom wise and righteous men are at length to be incorporated, as members of the same blessed society.

And as the body of Enoch was thus translated, it would naturally appear an intimation, that God had prepared a future happiness for the bodies of his people, as well as their souls, and consequently that the trophies of the grave should at length be recovered, and the sleeping dust of the saints raised and animated anew. And a future state of punishment for the wicked, is so evident a counterpart to this doctrine, that few could be so stupid as not to infer it, from the fact here under consideration.

Such important lessons as these might the world have learnt from the translation of any persons of distinguished piety; but there were some peculiar purposes to be answered by that of Enoch, considered not only as a preacher of righteousness, but as a prophet too, and as one who had foretold the *Coming of the Lord with ten thousand of his saints* †, to take vengeance on rebellious and impenitent sinners; and a day of vengeance to them, must surely imply a day of reward, and glory to those men whom they had despised, reviled and oppressed. Now if Enoch in his life on earth wrought no miracles, as we find not that he did, his ascension would be a most convincing proof of his divine mission; and indeed, as many of the miracles of Christ also were, it would be a specimen, as well as a seal, of the truth of the doctrine which he taught.

On all these accounts I think I may venture to say, the translation of Enoch would be a more important favour to others, than it was even to himself, and consequently it is reasonable to believe, that the same goodness which induced the divine Being to perpetuate the memory of this fact for the instruction and encouragement of future ages, would likewise induce him to make it so public and visible, that there should be at least a few credible eye-witnesses to attest it ‡.

* Psal. lviii. 11. † Jude 14.

‡ I have taken no notice of that singular account which the ingenious author of the Essay on Divine Dispensation, &c. gives of Enoch's translation; which he supposes was his being taken to dwell with the Shekinah, in the terrestrial paradise. I have waved the motion of this, because it depends on a very precarious

And thus, my brethren, you have heard of the piety of Enoch, and you have seen, as James expresses it, the *End of the Lord**. I shall conclude,

Thirdly, with a few hints, by way of improvement, which I shall leave you farther to prosecute in your own meditations.

You will naturally fix on such reflections as these.

1. How pleasant it is to think of this friendly intercourse, which through a Redeemer is established between heaven and earth.

It is strongly illustrated in this great instance, *Enoch walked with God*, and *God took him*. Is it not at once a delightful and a surprising thought? That the great Sovereign of universal nature, who humbleth himself to behold the angels, when they stand around him, vailing their faces, and covering their feet in his presence, should form such a friendship with human, yea with sinful creatures, that they may be said to walk with him; even they whose guilt might cause them to flee from his presence, like our fallen parents, and from whose pollutions he might justly turn away his holy eyes with abhorrence. Yet we see all these obstacles overcome; and hear of it, not as the privilege of Enoch alone, but of all his true Israel, that *He will dwell in them, and walk with him, that they shall be his people, and that he will be their God* †.

And in consequence of this, we are also raised to the blessed hope of being at length *taken to him*, though not in so immediate a manner, yet as surely, and at length as completely as Enoch was. A mortal creature may say, *Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory* ‡. Yea the lowest real christian has the security of his word and covenant, that he shall at last have a yet more solemn and more *Abundant entrance administered to him into the kingdom of* his Father and his *God* §.

And whence are these privileges and these hopes, my brethren? Let us often ask our own hearts the question, when we are enjoying God's presence, and waiting for his salvation. And let us answer it in those words of the apostle, *We that were once*

conjecture that the Shekinah had his stated abode there; and also because were this to be allowed, since this author doth not pretend to say, that Enoch was with the Shekinah in the ark, where he supposes that to have been during the deluge, he must grant that he ascended into heaven some time before the flood. So that I cannot see any end at all to be answered, by supposing this translation was any thing different from that ascension.

* James v. 11. † 2 Cor. vi. 16. 17. ‡ Psal. lxxiii. 24. § 2 Pet. i. 11.

*afar off, are brought near by the blood of Christ* *. By Christ hath God reconciled us to himself, by Christ have we now access to him as our Father; and as Christ, who hath the keys of death and the unseen world, is the person who is to call us from hence into that which is *within the vail;* so he is at length to complete the purposes of divine love to us, by *coming again* and *receiving us to himself*, that we, like triumphant Enoch, yea, and with him too in that day of his greatest triumph, may in our entire persons ascend to the regions of immortal holiness, and perfect joy: let us labour continually to feel the greatness of our obligations to this blessed Redeemer, and with daily dependance on his atonement and righteousness, his intercession and grace, let us, in every remaining step of this pilgrimage, be *Walking humbly with our God* †.

2. How solicitous should we be that we may have our lot, both in time and eternity, with those who, like Enoch, have *walked with God?*

I have now been describing the character and temper of a truly good man, a character common to all the children of God, whatever their particular denomination or profession may be. But must I not reasonably fear, that some among you are so much strangers to it, that you find this an unintelligible language? Let me address myself to such of you with a word of expostulation, and to all with a serious exhortation. Oh, that it might penetrate each of our hearts!

Why are you strangers to walking with God? Is it an imaginary thing, even this which scripture so honourably records, which God himself so singularly owned, and through the riches of his grace rewarded too? Oh Sirs there was surely as much reality and solidity in it, as in the heavenly world, in which it ended.

And let conscience answer; Is it not an honourable, is it not a pleasant way of passing through life? Do you think that while Enoch was thus employed, and entertained, he had indeed any reason to envy the richest, the greatest, the most prosperous, or the most luxurious sinner? Do you not in your hearts believe, that it must be a very comfortable thing to converse daily with God as a friend and a father, to conduct ourselves before him in such a manner as to be assured of his approbation, and to be able to rejoice that he knows every most secret thought of our soul? Do you not think it must sweeten solitude, to think of him as always near us, and increase the pleasures of

* Eph. ii. 13. † Mic. vi. 8.

society too, when our converse with others is made subservient to our communion with him? And above all, do you not really apprehend that reflections on a life like this would greatly soften the approach of death, and quite transform the very appearance of it?

And I beseech you to consider that this is not a light thought. However you may neglect God now, you must have one awful interview with him; and if you do not, and will not *walk with him*, he will in another, and very different sense of the word, *take you*. He will arrest your fugitive souls in the midst of these thoughtless ungrateful wanderings, and your spirits must return to God that gave them. Now doth not your own reason, as well as the divine word, tell you, that there will be an unspeakable difference between the manner in which different souls are received by him on that return: a difference between the reception of those who have lived in a holy friendship with him, and those who, like yourselves, have always been strangers to him; whose language it hath in effect been, "Let them walk with God that will, but I for my part have other company, and pleasures, and business to attend." Is there not an apparent fitness that the former should be taken into a state of everlasting nearness to God, and the latter driven to a perpetual distance from him, whom they have chosen to forget and forsake? And with all your self-partiality, would it not appear an indecency and irregularity in the divine administration, to treat such different persons upon a foot of equal friendship?

See to it, my friends, that you are not self-condemned. See to it, that you do not pass a sentence against your own souls, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life. *Acquaint yourselves with God now, and be at peace with him**, lest he resent the injury done to his offered friendship, and turn away from you in the day of your final distress, with a righteous disdain; for it is an everlasting, most obvious, but most important truth, that *They who are far from God, shall perish*†.

Let me also address a solemn exhortation to those that have experimentally known what such converse with God means, and who by his good Spirit have been led into a holy walk with him. Pursue it, I beseech you, with greater resolution and care; for, surely, it is well worth your pursuit. I appeal to you, christians, with pleasure on this head. Have not those been your most comfortable days in which you have most constantly

* Job xxii. 21. † Psal. lxxiii. 27.

attended to it? Days which have passed with the greatest delight, and which have been reflected upon with the greatest satisfaction? Is not this and that place recommended to you, by the dear remembrance, that you have walked with God there? This and that book and friend endeared, as having been instrumental in promoting that converse? Say then whether it be not worth your while, with most attentive reflection, to concert measures for improving and cultivating this divine friendship? Whether, when you have fixed upon them, it will not be your wisdom diligently to pursue them, though some considerable difficulties may be in your way? Let not any estrangedness grow between God and your souls, but review the various branches of Enoch's character as your own model, if you would live with joy, and die with courage. Let your conduct be such, especially in secret, and then we may reasonably conclude, that your domestic and public behaviour will not be much unlike it. And then you may enter into the spirit of our next reflection, which is all I shall add.

3. With how much pleasure should we look up after those holy souls, who, having *walked with God* upon earth, are now *taken by him* to an heavenly abode!

Can any of us apprehend, that if the nearest relatives of Enoch were witnesses of his translation, they beheld it with weeping eyes, or sent out a gale of sighs or peal of groans after him; how tenderly soever they loved him, and how much soever of the support or delight of their lives might seem to depend on his continuance with him? Or if their fondness thus prevailed over their reason and their faith, can we imagine that their ascending triumphant friend would have approved of such a conduct? Would he not rather have beheld it with a mixture of compassion and displeasure; if displeasure could have been felt in so happy a circumstance? But we will rather hope, that they hailed his flight to the paradise of God, and bore it away with them, as a long and a powerful cordial, under all the sorrows and distresses of life, that Enoch was so comfortably and so honourably delivered from them, and secured by adamantine walls from every invasion of sorrow and of sin; yea, from the sight of those crimes and miseries which had formerly tormented his righteous and tender spirit.

And why should not we in like manner congratulate our dear deceased friends, who are not any longer here with us, because God hath taken them? You will perhaps have a ready answer, and immediately say, Enoch was translated, but the friends we lament are dead, and our tears flow from that consi-

deration. But let me farther ask, is there not a passage to the presence of God through the valley of the shadow of death? And do we not firmly believe they have found that passage? In some cases, especially in a case like this now before us, we should think it a kind of impiety to doubt of it. And if so, methinks there is not so much difference between the temper, with which we should regard the deceased and translated saints, as we may be ready at first to imagine.

It is true the persons of whom we now speak have dropped their bodies in the grave; but that is no pain to them, nor any such important loss, as that for their sakes we should greatly regret it.

If we saw them after the labour of a fatiguing day, or after a long fit of painful and languishing illness, fallen into a gentle slumber, and knew that their minds were, during that interval, entertained with the visions of God, like those which the prophets saw, and raised to sublime and elevated devotion, beyond what they had ever before felt, should we mourn over them because their senses were locked up, and they did not, for that time, see the light of the sun, nor hear such poor conversation as ours? Should we not rather rejoice and be tenderly solicitous to guard their sleeping moments, and watch that nothing might break in upon them, and call them down to earth and vanity too soon? And are not their slumbers now as sweet, and are not their visions as bright and glorious? What, though they do not breathe? What, though their blood does not circulate, and the curtains of the grave be drawn around them? Is there so much in these circumstances, to give us anxiety and distress?

Oh but you will say, we should have a secret hope that our sleeping friends would awake again, and renewing the interrupted converse, relate to us what had passed in that interval; and we could with pleasure wait weeks and months in expectation of that. Nay, but shall we not ourselves ere long awake, if we are christians indeed? If we are *walking with God*, shall we not ere long be taken by him, not to the amusements of a pleasing dream, but to those solid substantial everlasting pleasures, which his saints above are drinking in with unutterable delight.

Lord *We are hoping for thy salvation*, may we in the mean time be *doing thy commandments* * *!* while we walk with thee, we will not complain of the length or the roughness of the

* Psal. cxix. 166.

way ; nor will we be inconsolable for the loss of the most pleasant companion, or most able guide. *For thy name's sake do thou lead us and guide us* *, and we will wait thy call to enter into thy rest.

Such were the sentiments and such the temper of that truly reverend and excellent person, whose death was the occasion, the very mournful occasion of my appearing this day amongst you ; on whose character it would be easy for me to dilate much more largely than my time will now admit, or than I judge proper to do in a funeral discourse, where flattery is so often introduced, that the simplicity of most obvious truth is ready to be suspected. I shall only say in a few words, that what I said of Enoch in the first head of my discourse, excepting only what was peculiar to his circumstances as a patriarch and a prophet, is what, by long observation, I had seen in Mr. Norris. And I appeal to those of his family, and to you his people, whether there was not, in almost every sentence, a visible resemblance, and whether it might not very properly be repeated here with a mere alteration of the name. So evident was it that he walked closely with God, and firmly believing the great doctrines both of natural and revealed religion, made it his constant care to behave as in the divine presence, and lived under the sensible tokens of divine acceptance and favour ; which diffused over his heart, and even over his countenance, an habitual joy, which is no where to be found on earth, but in christians of such distinguished attainments in piety.

But, though I must not allow myself to dwell on this pleasing subject, I hope I may be permitted publicly to acknowledge the sense I have of the favour of divine providence to me, in leading me so early into the acquaintance of this excellent person, and blessing me with so great a share of his friendship ; with which I was honoured from my first entrance into the ministry, and which his singular humanity and condescension, wisdom and piety, have rendered exceeding delightful and improving to me in all the succeeding years of life.

And surely I should be greatly deficient in the duty of this day, if I did not solemnly charge it upon you frequently to recollect your obligations to the divine goodness, in giving you so able and so tender a shepherd, and in continuing him amongst you for so long a time with such cordial love, that repeated, unanimous, and earnest solicitations from

* Psal. xxxi. 3.

the most considerable congregations in the neighbouring counties *, could not prevail upon him to remove from you. So evident was it that he took the oversight of you, *Not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind* †.

It may eminently be said of you, my friends, in a spiritual sense, that you have been *Fed with the finest of the wheat*, as the pure and uncorrupted truths of the gospel have been preached amongst you, with plainness and seriousness, and in the spirit of love. Your minds have not been amused with useless subtleties and barren speculations: you have not been vexed with *Strifes of words unprofitable and vain*, nor grieved with passionate invectives against your brethren of any denomination: Invectives which are never more criminal than when delivered in the name of the Lord, and which too often turn the food of souls into poison, and *that which should have been for their welfare into a trap.* This *Good man brought out of the good treasure of his heart good things* ‡. His generous and benevolent soul overflowed with sentiments of candour and love, and he was never more in his own element, than when he was telling you that the *Kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost* §. And I firmly believe, that in the eight and thirty years of his ministry among you, he never delivered a sermon, or a sentence, inconsistent with that great principle.

I join with you in lamenting that none of those elaborate and judicious discourses which he delivered among you, from sabbath to sabbath, are, or can be, published to the world. For though it is certain, that his graceful and venerable aspect, and his easy yet lively manner, gave a peculiar beauty to them, as delivered by himself; yet, when I consider how judiciously his thoughts were selected, how methodically they were disposed, and with what propriety, elegance, and spirit, they were expressed, I am well assured, they would generally have been esteemed a rich addition to that great number of practical writings, with which our age and country is already blessed, and with which I hope it will still abound.

But I trust, my friends, it is not in vain you have heard those discourses which you cannot review. I know they fell as soft as showers of snow on the ears of his hearers; and I hope they also penetrated your hearts, and left permanent and fructi-

* Particularly Birmingham and Nottingham. † 1 Pet. v. 2. ‡ Mat. xii. 35. § Rom. xiv. 17.

fying effects there, which will not pass away like snow before the sun. Let your profiting then appear unto all men. And so much the rather, as you have had the advantage of seeing his precepts illustrated by the most prudent, inoffensive, and amiable behaviour. You have seen him providing things honest and honourable in the sight of all men. You know how gentle, how benevolent, how cheerful, and how useful his conversation was. How open his hand and his heart were to every office of friendship, to every work of charity. Go ye therefore, and do likewise.

As for what he was in the domestic relation of life, I had almost said, I wish it be not too long, but I will rather say, too tenderly remembered. The loss of a husband so constantly obliging, so affectionately sympathizing, so well furnished as a prudent guide, and a pleasant companion, and so well disposed for the offices of both, will, I fear, be too deeply felt. May the sense of it be tempered with those divine consolations, which he was so eminently fit to administer, but which have not surely lost their value, and will not, I hope, lose their relish, though no longer administered by him! May the children, which were dear to him as his own, never forget with how much diligence he instructed them, with how much importunity and constancy he prayed for them, and with what tenderness he watched over all their interests! May they ever behave answerably to those advantages, that the numberless petitions which have been put up for them, may descend in the richest blessings on their heads!

I know, my friends, that the loss must sit heavy on all your hearts, and as to those with whom I have personally conversed, since this breach was made, I have heard your lamentations, and seen your tears. But remember, I beseech you, how much you owe to the divine goodness in giving you such a minister, and such a friend, in continuing him among you, with such vigour of health and cheerfulness of spirits, for so many years, a burning and shining light; I may add, even in the decline of life, growing brighter and brighter. And though his removal, while his capacities of usefulness were to the last so great *, must be very affective to you, yet I cannot forbear saying, that you have some peculiar

* It is observable that Mr. Norris preached the last sabbath he lived, and concluded the public service with a copious, lively and affectionate prayer for his people, which could not have been more suitable if he had known he was then taking his last farewell.

reason to be thankful for the manner and circumstances of his death.

Nature was not racked with tormenting pain, nor worn out by a tedious consuming illness; but the good man grew a little drowsy towards the evening of his long day, and having *served his generation according to the will of God*, gently *fell asleep*, as he was going from one apartment of his house to another; and all the business and struggle of dying was over, in less time than could have served him to get up the stairs, as he was attempting to do. It is a delightful thought that God *dismissed his servant* in so *peaceful* a manner, that his death so much resembled a translation, and *he was not, for God took him.*

I doubt not, but every one of us is ready to say, "so may I live, and so may I die!" But while we live here, if we have any regard to our own comfort, or the public good, it must grieve us, to see our breaches thus multiplied upon us, to see the lights of the sanctuary extinguished, and his people here, and in so many neighbouring flocks, even at the very same time, *left as sheep, having no shepherd.* Yet I must hope the *good Shepherd of Israel* will continue to feed you, and as *the residue of the Spirit is with him*, will raise up a suitable supply. To him I most cordially recommend you and all my other friends, who are mourning your losses and their own. And under all that burden of care and sorrow, in which my share is so peculiarly apparent, would exhort you to say, and join with you in saying, *The Lord liveth, and blessed be our rock, and let the God of our salvation be exalted**.

* Psal. xviii. 46.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

THE

## CHRISTIAN WARRIOR ANIMATED AND CROWNED:

*A Sermon occasioned by the Heroic Death of the Honourable Col. James Gardiner, who was slain in the Battle at Preston-Pans, September* 21, 1745. *Preached at Northampton, October* 13.

TO THE

## RIGHT HON. THE LADY FRANCES GARDINER.

MADAM,

THE intimate knowledge which I had of Colonel Gardiner's private as well as public character, and of that endeared friendship which so long subsisted between him and your Ladyship, makes me more sensible than most others can be, both of the inexpressible loss you have sustained, and of the exquisite sense you have of it. I might, in some degree, argue what you felt, from the agony with which my own heart was torn by that ever to be lamented stroke, which deprived the nation, and the church, of so great an ornament and blessing: And indeed, Madam, I was so sensible of your calamity, as to be ready in my first thoughts to congratulate you, when I heard the report which at first prevailed, that you died under the shock. Yet cooler reflection teaches me, on many accounts, to rejoice that your Ladyship has survived that dearest part of yourself; though after having been so lovely and pleasant in your lives, it would have been matter of personal rejoicing, in death not to have been divided. The numerous and promising offspring with which God hath blessed your marriage, had evidently the highest interest in the continued life of so pious and affectionate a mother: And I hope, and assuredly believe, there was a more important, and to you a much dearer interest concerned, as God may be, and is, signally honoured, by the manner in which you bear this heaviest and most terrible stroke of his paternal rod.

God hath been pleased, Madam, to make you both eminent for a variety of graces; and he has proportionably distinguished you both, in the opportunity he has given you of exercising those, which suit the most painful scenes that can attend a pious and an honourable life. But when I consider, what it is, to have lost such a man, at such a time, and in such circumstances, I must needs declare, that brave and heroic as the death of the Colonel was, your Ladyship's part is beyond all comparison the hardest. Yet even here has the grace of Christ been sufficient for you; and I join with your Ladyship in adoring the power and faithfulness of him, who has here

so remarkably shewn, that he forgets not his promise to all his people of a strength proportionable to their day; that they may be enabled to glorify him in the hottest furnace, into which it is possible they should be cast.

To hear, as I have heard from several persons of distinguished character, who have lately had the happiness of being near your Ladyship, of that meek resignation to the divine will, of that calm patience, of that christian courage, with which, in so weak a state of health and spirits, you have supported under this awful providence, has given me great pleasure, but no surprise. So near a relation to so brave a man might have taught some degree of fortitude, to a soul less susceptible of it than your Ladyship's. Nor is there any doubt, but that the prayers he has so long been laying up in store for you, especially since the decay of his constitution gave him reason to expect a speedy remove, will assuredly at such a season come into remembrance before God. And above all, the sublime principles of the christian religion, so deeply imbibed into your own heart as well as his, will not fail to exert their energy on such an occasion. These, Madam, will teach you to view the hand of a wise, a righteous, and a gracious God in this event; and will shew you, that a friendship founded on such a basis, so very endearing, and so closely cemented, as that which has been here for many years a blessing to you both, can know only a very short interruption, and will soon grow up into an union infinitely nobler and more delightful, which never shall be liable to any separation.

In the mean time, Madam, it may comfort us not a little under the sense of our present loss, to think what religious improvement we may gain by it, if we are not wanting to ourselves: And happy shall we be indeed, if we so hear the rod, as to receive the instructions it so naturally suggests and enforces. Persons of any serious reflection will learn from this awful event, how little we can judge of the divine favour by the visible dispensations of providence here: They will learn, and it may be of great importance to consider it, just in such a crisis as this, that no distinguished degree of piety can secure the very best of men from the sword of a common enemy: And they will see, written, alas, in characters of the most precious blood, that war ever spilt in our island, the vanity of the surest protectors and comforters which mortality can afford, at a time when they are most needed.

These are general instructions, which, I hope, thousands will receive, on this universally lamented occasion: But to you, Madam, and to me, and to all that were honoured with the most intimate friendship of this christian hero, his death has a peculiar voice. Whilst it leads us back into so many past scenes of delight, in the remembrance of which we now pour out our souls within us, it calls aloud, amidst all this tender distress, for a tribute of humble thankfulness to God, that ever we enjoyed such a friend, and especially in such an intimacy of mutual affection; and that we had an opportunity of observing, in so many instances, the secret recesses of a heart, which God had enriched, adorned, and ennobled with so much of his own image, and such abundant communications of his grace: It calls for our redoubled diligence and resolution, in imitating that bright assemblage of virtues, which shone so resplendent in our illustrious friend: And surely it must, by a kind of irresistible influence, mortify our affections to this impoverished world; and must cause nature to concur with grace, in raising our hearts upwards to that glorious abode, where he dwells triumphant and immortal, and waits our arrival with an ardor of pure and elevated love, which it was impossible for death to quench.

Next to these views, nothing can give your Ladyship greater satisfaction, than to reflect, how happy you made the amiable consort you have lost, in that intimate relation you so long bore to each other; in which, I well know, that growing years ripened and increased your mutual esteem and friendship. Nor will your generous heart be insensible of that pleasure, which may arise from reflecting, that the manner of his death, though in itself so terrible, that we dare not trust imagination with the particular review, was to him, in those circumstances, most glorious; to religion highly ornamental; and to his country, great as his loss is, on various accounts beneficial. Far, very far, be it from us to think, that Colonel Gardiner, though fallen by the weapons of rebellion and treason, has fought and died in vain. I trust in God, that so heroic a behaviour will inspire our warriors with augmented courage, now they are called to exert it in a cause, the most noble and important that can ever be in question, the cause of our laws, our liberty, and religion. I trust, that all who keep up a correspondence with heaven by prayer, will renew their intercession for this bleeding land with increasing fervour, now we have lost one who stood in the breach with such unwearied importunity. And I am well assured, that of the multitudes who lay up his memory in their inmost hearts with veneration and love, not a few will be often joining their most affectionate prayers to God, for your Ladyship, and the dear rising branches of your family, with those which you may, in consequence of a thousand obligations, always expect from

*Madam,*

*Your Ladyship's most faithful*

*and obedient humble Servant,*

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, Nov. 27, 1745.*

# SERMON IV.

Rev. ii. 10. latter Part. —— *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*

IT is a glory peculiar to the christian religion, that it is capable of yielding joy and triumph to the mind, amidst calamities, in which the strength of nature, and of a philosophy that has no higher a support, can hardly give it serenity, or even patience. Those boasted aids are but like a candle in some tempestuous night, which how artificially soever it may be fenced in, is often extinguished amidst the storm, in which it should guide and cheer the traveller, or the mariner; whom it leaves on a sudden, in darkness, horror and fear: While the consolation of the gospel, like the sun, makes a sure day even when behind the thickest cloud, and soon emerges from it with an accession of more sensible lustre.

The observation is verified in these words, considered in connection with that awful providence, which has this day determined my thoughts to fix upon them, as the subject of my discourse; the fall of that truly great and good man, Colonel Gardiner: The endearing tenderness of whose friendship would have rendered his death an unspeakable calamity to me, had his character been only of the common standard; as on the other hand, the exalted excellency of his character makes his death to be lamented by thousands, who were not happy in any peculiar intimacy or personal acquaintance with him.

While we mourn the brave warrior, the exemplary christian, and the affectionate friend; lost to ourselves and our country, to the church and the world, at a time when we most needed all the defence of his bravery, all the edification of his example, all the comfort of his converse: Struck with the various and aggravated sorrow of so sudden, and so terrible a blow, methinks there is but one voice that can cheer us, which is this of the great *Captain of our salvation*, so lately addressing him, and still addressing us, in these comprehensive and animated words; *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

With regard to the connection of them, it may be sufficient to observe, that our Lord in all these seven epistles to the Asiatic churches represents the christian life as a warfare, and the blessings of the future state as rewards to be bestowed on conquerors. *To him that overcometh will I give* such and such royal donatives. Pursuing the same allegory, he warns the church of Smyrna of an approaching combat, which should be attended with some severe circumstances. Some of them were to become captives; *the devil shall cast some of you into prison:* And though the power of the enemy was to be limited, in its extent, as well as its duration, to the *tribulation of ten days*, it seems to be implied, that while many were harrassed and distressed during that time, some of them should before the close of it be called to resist unto blood. But their great leader furnishes them with suitable armour, and proportionable courage, by this gracious assurance, which it is our present business farther to contemplate: *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

In which words you naturally observe a charge,——and a promise by which it is enforced.——I shall briefly illustrate each, and then conclude with some reflections upon the whole.

First, I am to open the charge here given: *Be thou faithful unto death.*

Concerning which I would observe, that though it is immediately addressed to the church at Smyrna, yet the nature of the thing and numberless passages of the divine word concur to prove, that it is common in its obligation, to all christians, and indeed to all men.

I shall not be large in explaining the nature of faithfulness in general; concerning which I might shew you, that the word here rendered faithful, has sometimes a relation to the testimony which God has given us, and sometimes to some trust that he has reposed in us. In the former sense, it is properly rendered believing, and opposed to infidelity: *Be not faithless, but believing**. In the latter, it is opposed to injustice: *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much;* whereas *he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much*†. And it is in reference to this sense of it, that our Lord represents himself as saying to the man who had improved his talents aright, *Well done, good and faithful servant*‡! Our deceased friend was so remarkably faithful in both these senses; so ready to admit, and so zealous to defend the *faith once delivered to the saints;* and so

* John xx. 27. † Luke xvi. 10. ‡ Mat. xxv. 23.

active in improving those various talents, with which in mercy to many others as well as to himself, God had entrusted him; that it was very natural to touch upon these significations of the word, though it has here a more particular view to another virtue, for which he was so illustriously conspicuous, I mean, the courageous fidelity of a soldier in his warfare.

In this sense of the word, it is opposed to treachery or cowardice, desertion or disobedience to military orders. And thus it is used elsewhere in this same book of the Revelation, when speaking of those who war under the banner of *The Lamb, the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, the inspired writer tells us, *they are called, and chosen, and faithful* *, a select body of brave and valiant soldiers.

This hint will also fix the easiest and plainest sense in which the persons, to whom the text is addressed, are required to be faithful *unto death:* Which, though it does indeed in general imply a *Patient continuance in well-doing* †, in whatever scenes of life divine providence may place us; yet does especially refer to martial bravery, and express a readiness to face death in its most terrible forms, when our great general shall lead us on to it. You well know this to be an indispensable condition of our being acknowledged by him in the day of his final triumph: And of this he warned those that gathered around him, when he was first raising his army, under the greatest disadvantages in outward appearance; expressly and plainly telling them, that they must be content to follow him to martyrdom, to follow him to crucifixion, when they receive the word of command to do it; or that all their profession of regard to him would be in vain. *If any man*, says he, *will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me* ‡: For *He that loveth his own life more than me, is not worthy of me* §; he does not deserve the honour of bearing my name, and passing for one of my soldiers: indeed he *Cannot* on any terms *be my disciple* ‖.

This therefore is in effect the language of our Lord, when he says, *be thou faithful unto death:* It is as if he had said, "Remember all you of Smyrna, or of any other place and country, that call yourselves christians, throughout all generations, that you were by baptism enlisted under my banners: Remember, that you have as it were sealed, and subscribed your engagement to me, by every sacrament you have since attended;" as indeed it is well known, the word sacrament originally signifies a military oath, which soldiers take as a pledge of fidelity to

* Rev. xvii. 14. † Rom. ii. 7. ‡ Mark viii. 34. § Mat. x. 37, 39. ‖ Luke xiv. 26.

their general: "Remember therefore, that you are ever to continue with me, and to march forward under my direction, whatever hardships and fatigues may lie in the way. And remember, that if I lead you on to the most formidable combat, you must cheerfully obey the word of command, and charge boldly, though you should immediately die, whether by the sword, or by fire. Should you dare to flee, I am myself your enemy; and the weapons which I bear, would justly be levelled at your own traitorous heads. But if you bravely follow me, I know how to make you ample amends, even in circumstances when no human power and gratitude can reach you; for it is my glorious prerogative to engage, that to those who are thus *faithful unto death, I will give a crown of life.*" We are therefore,

Secondly, to consider the promise, by which the charge is enforced: *I will give thee a crown of life.*

And here I might observe,——*a crown of life* is the glorious reward proposed,——and it is to be received *from the hand of Christ.*

1. *A crown of life* is the reward proposed: Which we are sure in this connection implies, both grandeur and felicity; here, though rarely, connected together.

There is, no doubt, an allusion in these words, to the ancient, and I think very prudent, custom of animating the bravery of soldiers by honorary rewards, and particularly by crowns; sometimes of laurel, and sometimes, in some extraordinary instances, of silver or gold; which they were permitted to wear on public occasions, and in consequence of receiving which they were sometimes entitled to some peculiar immunities. But here our Lord Jesus Christ, conscious of his own divine power and prerogative, speaks with a dignity and elevation, which no earthly prince or commander could ever assume; promising *a crown of life*, and that, as was observed before, even to those who should fall in the battle: *A crown of life* in the highest sense; not only one, which should ever be fresh and fair, but which should give immortality to the happy brow it adorned; and be for ever worn, not only as the monument of bravery and victory, but as the ensign of royalty too: *A crown* connected with *a kingdom*, and with what no other kingdom can give, perpetual life to enjoy it; perpetual youth and vigour to relish all its delights. And this is agreeable to the language of other scriptures, where we read of the *Crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*; a crown of righteousness, which*

* James i. 12.

*the Lord the righteous judge shall give* *: *a crown of glory, which fadeth not away* †. We may also observe,

2. That it is said to be *given by Christ.*

This some pious commentators have explained, as intimating, that it is the gift of the Redeemer's free and unmerited grace, and not a retribution due to the merit of him that receiveth it. And this is an undoubted truth, which it is of the highest importance to acknowledge and consider. The proper *Wages of sin, is death;* but *eternal life is,* in opposition to wages, *the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord* ‡. We should humbly own it every day, that there is no proportion between the value of our services, and the *crown* which we expect to receive: Should own, that it is mercy, that pardons our sins, and grace, that accepts our services; much more, that crowns them. Grace, grace, shall, as it were, be engraven upon that *crown,* in characters large and indelible: Nor will that inscription diminish its lustre, or impair the pleasure with which we shall receive it. I could not forbear mentioning this thought, as a truth of the utmost importance, which stands on the firmest basis of very many express scriptures; a truth, of which perhaps no man living had ever a deeper sense, than our deceased friend. But I mention it thus obliquely, because it may be doubted whether we can justly argue it from hence; since the word *give* is sometimes used for rendering a retribution justly due, and that in instances where grace and favour have, in propriety of speech, no concern at all §.

But it is certain, that this expression, *I will give thee a crown of life,* is intended to lead our thoughts to this important circumstance; that this *crown* is to be *received from the hand of Christ* himself. And the apostle Paul evidently refers to the same circumstance, in terms which shew how much he entered into the spirit of the thought, when he says, *The Lord the righteous judge shall give it me* ‖: He himself, the great judge of the contest, whose eye witnesses the whole course of it, whose decision cannot err, and from whose sentence there is no appeal: Alluding to the judge who presided in the Grecian games, who was always a person of rank and eminence, and himself reached forth the reward to him who overcame in them.

So that on the whole, when our Lord Jesus Christ says, *Be*

* 2 Tim. iv. 8. † 1 Pet. v. 4. ‡ Rom. vi. 23.

§ Compare Mat. xx. 8. *Give the labourers their hire* with Col. iv. 1. *Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.*

‖ 2 Tim. iv. 8.

*thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;* methinks our devout meditations may expatiate upon the words, in some such paraphrase as this. It is as if he had said to you, and to me, and to all his people, "Oh my faithful soldiers, fear not death in its most terrible array; for you are immortal. *Fear not them that can kill the body*:* You have a nobler part, which they cannot reach; and I will undertake, not only for its rescue, but its happiness. I will answer for it, on the honour of my royal word, that it shall live in a state of noble enlargement, of triumphant joy. Think on me: *I am he that liveth, though I was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore†:* And *Because I live, you shall live also‡;* shall exist in a state, that deserves the great and honourable name of life; so that earth in all its lustre and pleasure, when compared with it, is but as a scene of death, or at best as an amusing *Dream when one awaketh§.*"

We may also consider him, as pursuing this animating address, and saying, "My brave companions in tribulation and patience, you shall not only live, but reign. Think not, thou good soldier, who art now fighting under my banner, that thy general will wear his honours alone. If I have my crown, if I have my triumph, be assured that thou also shalt have thine. Thou mayest indeed seem to perish in the combat; and thy friends may mourn, and thine enemies insult, as if thou wert utterly cut off. But behold, true victory spreads over thee her golden wing, and holds out, not a garland of fading flowers or leaves, but a crown that shall keep its lustre, when all the costliest gems on earth are melted in the general burning; yea, when the luminaries of heaven are extinguished, and the sun and stars fade away in their orbs."

"Nor will I," does he seem to say, "send thee this crown by some inferior hand; not even by the noblest angel, that waits on the throne I have now ascended. Thou shalt *receive it from mine own hand;*" from that hand, which would make the least gift valuable: What a dignity then will it add to the greatest! "Nor will I myself confer this reward in private; it shall be given with the most magnificent solemnity. Thou shalt be brought to me before the assembled world: Thy name shall be called over; thou shalt appear, and I will own thee, and crown thee, in public view. Thy friends shall see it with raptures of joy, and congratulate an honour in which they shall also share. Thine enemies shall see it with envy and with rage, to increase their confusion and misery: They shall see, that while by their

* Mat. x. 28. † Rev. i. 18. ‡ John xiv. 19. § Psal. lxxiii. 20.

malicious assaults they were endeavouring to destroy thee, they were only establishing thy throne, and brightening the lustre which shall for ever adorn thy brow; while theirs is blasted with the thunder of resistless wrath, and deep engraven with the indelible marks of vengeance. This *crown* shalt thou for ever wear, as the perpetual token of my esteem and affection: Nor shall it be merely a shining ornament: A rich revenue, a glorious authority, goes along with it. *Thou shalt reign for ever and ever**; and be a *King*, as well as a *priest unto God*†."

They who enter by a lively faith into the import of these glorious words, will, I doubt not, pardon my having expatiated so largely upon them. *We have believed, and therefore have we spoken*‡: And I question not, but that many of you have in the course of this representation prevented me in some of the reflections, which naturally arise from such a subject. Yet it may not be improper to assist your devout meditations upon them.

(1.) What reason have we to adore the grace of our blessed Redeemer, which prepares, and bestows, such rewards as these!

While we hear him saying, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;* methinks it is but natural for each of our hearts to answer. "Lord, dost thou speak of giving a *crown*, a crown of life and glory to me! Too great, too great, might the favour seem, if I, who have so often lifted up my rebellious hand against thy throne, might be allowed to lay down this guilty head in the dust, and lose the memory of my treasons, and the sense of my punishment together, in everlasting forgetfulness. And is such a *crown* prepared, and wilt thou, my injured Sovereign, who mightest so justly arm thyself with vengeance against me, bestow this crown with thine own hand; with all these other circumstances of dignity, so as even to make my triumphs thine own!——What is my strictest fidelity to thee? Though I do indeed, as I humbly desire that I may, continue *faithful unto death*, I am yet but an *Unprofitable servant; I have done* no more than *my duty*§. I have pursued thy work, in thy strength; and, in consequence of that love which thou hast put into my heart, it hath been its own reward: And dost thou thus crown one favour with another!——Blessed Jesus, I would with all humility *lay that crown at thy feet*, acknowledging before thee, and the whole world, as I shall at length do in a more expressive form, that it is not only the gift of thy love, but

* Rev. xxii. 5. † Rev. i. 6. ‡ 2 Cor. iv. 13. § Luke xvii. 10.

the *purchase of thy blood.* Never, never had I beheld it, otherwise than at an unapproachable distance, as an aggravation of my misery and despair, hadst not thou worn another *crown*, a crown of infamy, and of thorns. The gems which must for ever adorn my temples, were formed from those precious drops, that once trickled down thine; and all the splendor of my *Robes* of triumph is owing to their being *washed in the blood of the Lamb* *." With what pleasing wonder may we pursue the thought! And while it employs our mind,

(2.) How justly may this awaken a generous ambition to secure this *crown* to ourselves!

Dearly as it was purchased by our blessed Redeemer, it is most *freely offered* to us, to the youngest, to the meanest, to the most unworthy. It is not prepared, merely for those that have worn an earthly diadem or coronet: Would to God it were not despised by most of them, as a thing less worthy of their thoughts, than the most trifling amusement, by which they unbend their minds from the weighty cares attending their station! But it is prepared for you; even for every one, who thinks it worth pursuing, and accepting, upon the terms of the gospel covenant; for every one, who believing in Christ, and loving him, is humbly determined through his grace to be *faithful unto death.*—— And shall this glorious proposal be made to you in vain? Were it an earthly crown that could lawfully be obtained, are there not many of us, notwithstanding all its weight of anxieties, and all the piercing thorns with which we might know it to be lined, that would be ready eagerly to seize it, and perhaps to contend and quarrel with each other for it? But here is no foundation for contention. Here is a *crown* for each; and such a *crown*, that all the royal ornaments of all the princes upon earth, when compared with it, are lighter than a feather, and viler than dust. And shall we neglect it? shall we refuse it, from such a hand too, as that by which it is offered? Shall we so *Judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life* †, as thereby indeed to make ourselves worthy of eternal death? For there is no other alternative.—— But blessed be God, it is not universally neglected. There are, I doubt not, among you, many who pursue it, many who shall assuredly obtain it. For their sakes let us reflect,

(3.) How courageously may the *heads* which are to wear such a crown, *be lifted up* to face all the trials of life and death!

Those trials may be various, and perhaps extreme; but if borne aright, far from depriving us of this *crown*, they will only

* Rev. vii. 14. † Acts xiii. 46.

serve to increase its lustre. It is the apostle Paul's express assertion; and he speaks, as transported with the thought: *For this cause we faint not, but though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal* *. Surely with this support, we may not only live, but triumph, in poverty, in reproach, in weakness, in pain: And with this we may die, not only serenely, but joyfully. Oh my friends, where are our hearts? Where is our faith? Nay I will add, where is our reason? Why are not our eyes, our desires, and our hopes, more frequently directed upward? Surely one ray from that resplendent diadem might be sufficient to confound all the false charms of these transitory vanities, which indeed owe all their lustre to the darkness in which they are placed. Surely when our *spirits are overwhelmed within us*, one glance of it might be sufficient to animate and elevate them; and might teach us to say, in the midst of dangers, sorrows, and death, *In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us* †. Thus have some triumphed in the last extremities of nature; and both the subject, and the occasion also, loudly calls us to reflect,

(4.) What reason we have to congratulate these happy souls, that have already received the *crown of life!*

When we are weeping over the cold, yea, the bleeding remains of such, surely it is for ourselves, and not for them, that the stream flows. The thought of their condition, far from moving our compassion, may rather inspire us with joy, and with praise. Look not on their pale countenance, nor on the wide and deep wounds, through which perhaps the soul rushed out to seize the great prize of its faith and hope; though even those wounds appear beautiful, when earned by distinguished virtue, by piety to their country, and their God. Look not on the eyes closed in death, or the once honoured and beloved head, now covered with the dust of the grave: But view, by an internal believing eye, that different form which the exalted triumphant spirit already wears, the earnest of a yet brighter glory. Their great leader, whose care of them we are fondly ready to suspect, or secretly to complain of as deficient in such circumstances as these, points, as it were, to the *white robes*, and

* 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17, 18. † Rom. viii. 37.

the *flourishing palms*, which he has given them; and calls for our regard to the *crowns of life* which he has set on their heads, and to the *songs of joy and praise* to which he has formed their exulting tongues. And do we sully and dishonour their triumphs with our tears? Do we think so meanly of heaven, and of them, as to wish them with us again: That they might eat and drink at our tables; that they might talk with us in our low language; that they might travel with us from stage to stage in this wilderness; and take their share with us in those vanities of life, of which we ourselves are so often weary, that there is hardly a week, or a day, in which we are not lifting up our eyes, and saying with a deep inward groan, *Oh that we had wings like a dove! Then would we flee away, and be at rest* *.

Surely with relation to these faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, who have already fallen, it is a matter of no small joy to reflect, that their *Warfare is accomplished* †; that they have at length passed through every scene in which their fidelity could be endangered; so that now, they are inviolably secure. How much more then should we rejoice, that they are *entered*, not only into the rest, but *into the joy of their Lord;* that they conquered, even when they fell, and are now reaping the fruits, the celestial and immortal fruits, of that last great victory?

A sense of honour often taught the heathens, when attending those friends to the funeral pile, who had died honourably in their country's cause, to use some ceremonies expressive of their joy for their glory; though that glory was an empty name, and all the reward of it a wreath of laurel, which was soon to crackle in the flame, and vanish into smoak. And shall not the joy and glory of the living spirit affect us, much more than they could be affected with the honours paid to the mangled corpse?

Let us then think with reverence, and with joy, on the pious dead; and especially on those, whom God honoured with any special opportunities of approving their fidelity, in life, or in death: And if we mourn, as who, in some circumstances, can forbear it? let it be as christians, with that mixture of high congratulation, with that erect countenance, and that undaunted heart, which become those that see by faith their exaltation and felicity; and burning with a strong and sacred eagerness to join their triumphant company, let us be ready to share in the most painful of their trials, that we may also share in their glories.

And surely, if I have ever known a life, and a death, capa-

* Psal. lv. 6. † Isai. xl. 2.

ble of inspiring us with these sentiments in their sublimest elevations, it was the life and the death of that illustrious christian hero, Colonel Gardiner ; whose character was too well known to many of you, by some months residence here, to need your being informed of it from me ; and whose history was too remarkable, to be confined within those few remaining moments, which must be allotted to the finishing of this discourse. Yet there was something so uncommon in both, that I think it of high importance to the honour of the gospel and grace of Christ, that they should be delivered down to posterity, in a distinct and particular view. And therefore, as the providence of God, in concurrence with that most intimate and familiar friendship with which this great and good man was pleased to honour me, gives me an opportunity of speaking of many important things, especially relating to his religious experiences, with greater exactness and certainty than most others might be capable of doing ; and as he gave me his full permission, in case I should have the affliction to survive him, to declare freely whatever I knew of him, which I might apprehend conducive to the glory of God, and the advancement of religion ; I purpose publishing, in a distinct tract, some remarkable passages of his life, illustrated by extracts from his own letters, which speak in the most forcible manner the genuine sentiments of his heart. But as I promise myself considerable assistance in this work from some valuable persons in the northern part of our island, and possibly from some of his own papers, to which our present confusions forbid my access, I must delay the execution of this design at least for a few months ; and must likewise take heed, that I do not too much anticipate what I may then offer to the public view, by what it might otherwise be very proper to mention now.

Let it therefore suffice for the present to remind you, that Colonel Gardiner was one of the most illustrious instances of the energy, and indeed I must also add, of the sovereignty of divine grace, which I have heard or read of in modern history. He was in the most amazing and miraculous manner, without any divine ordinance, without any religious opportunity, or peculiar advantage, deliverance, or affliction, reclaimed on a sudden, in the vigour of life and health, from the most licentious and abandoned sensuality, not only to a steady course of regularity and virtue, but to high devotion, and strict, though unaffected sanctity of manners : A course, in which he persisted for more than twenty-six years, that is, to the close of life, so remarkably eminent for piety towards God, diffusive hu-

manity and christian charity, lively faith, deep humility, strict temperance, active diligence in improving time, meek resignation to the will of God, steady patience in enduring afflictions, unaffected contempt of secular interest, and resolute and courageous zeal in maintaining truth, as well as in reproving, and, where his authority might take place, restraining vice and wickedness of every kind; that I must deliberately declare, that when I consider all these particulars together, it is hard for me to say where, but in the book of God, he found his example, or where he has left his equal. Every one of these articles, with many more, I hope, if God spare my life, to have an opportunity of illustrating, in such a manner as to shew, that he was a living demonstration of the energy and excellency of the christian religion; nor can I imagine how I can serve its interests better, than by recording what I have seen and known upon this head, known to my edification, as well as my joy.

But oh, how shall I lead back your thoughts, and my own, to what we once enjoyed in him, without too deep and tender a sense of what we have lost! To have *poured out his soul* in blood; to have fallen by the savage and rebellious hands of his own countrymen, at the wall of his own house; deserted by those, who were under the highest obligations that can be imagined to have defended his life with their own; and above all, to have seen with his dying eyes the enemies of our religion and liberties triumphant, and to have heard in his latest moments the horrid noise of their insulting shouts;—is a scene, in the view of which we are almost tempted to say, Where were the shields of angels? Where the eye of providence? Where the remembrance of those numberless prayers which had been offered to God for the preservation of such a man, at such a time as this?——But let faith assure us, that he was never more dear and precious in the eye of his divine leader, than in these dreadful moments, when if sense were to judge, he might seem most neglected.

That is of all others the happiest death, which may most sensibly approve our fidelity to God, and our zeal for his glory. To stand singly in the combat with the fiercest enemies, in the best of causes, when the whole regiment he commanded, fled; to throw himself with so noble an ardor to defend those on foot, whom the whole body which he headed were appointed to support, when he saw that the fall of the nearest commander exposed those brave men to the extremity of danger, were circumstances that evidently shewed, how much he held honour

and duty dearer than life. He could not but be conscious of the distinguished profession he had made, under a religious character; he could not but be sensible, how much our army, in circumstances like these, needs all that the most generous examples can do, to animate its officers and its soldiers: And therefore, although when his men would hear no voice but that of their fears he might have retreated without infamy, he seems deliberately and rightly to have judged, that it was better he should sacrifice in such a cause the little remainder of his life, than attempt to preserve it by a conduct, which might leave the least room even for envy and prejudice to suggest, that the regard to religion and the public which he had so remarkably professed on all occasions, was not strong enough to lead him to face danger and death, which natural bravery itself had in early youth taught him to despise. He had long since felt the genuine force of honour sanctified by piety; and consequently, had too just a zeal for his king and country, to bear the thought of deserting the trust committed to him in such an important moment; too warm a love for the protestant religion, not to rejoice in a call of providence to bleed in its defence. And therefore, that he might make the last and utmost opposition in his power to a rebellious crew, by whose success, should it go on, an inlet would be opened to the cruel ravages of arbitrary power, and to the bloody and relentless rage of popish superstition, he *Loved not his life unto the death* *. And in this view his death was martyrdom, and has, I doubt not, received the applauses and rewards of it: For what is martyrdom, but voluntarily to meet death, for the honour of God, and the testimony of a good conscience?

And if it be indeed true, as it is reported on very considerable authority, that before he expired, he had an interview with the leader of the opposite party, and declared in his presence "the full assurance he had of an immortal crown, which he was going to receive," it is a circumstance worthy of being had in everlasting remembrance: As in that case providence may seem wonderfully to have united two seemingly inconsistent circumstances, in the manner of his dying; the alternative of either of which he has spoken of in my hearing, as what with humble submission to the great Lord of life he could most earnestly wish: "That if he were not called directly to die for the truth," which he rightly judged the most glorious and happy lot of mor-

* Rev. xii. 11.

tality, " he might either fall in the field of battle, fighting in defence of the religion and liberties of his country; or might have an opportunity of expressing his hopes and joys, as a christian, to the honour of his Lord, and the edification of those about him, in his departing moments; and so might go off this earthly stage," as in the letter that relates his death, it is expressly said that he did, triumphing in the assurance of a blessed immortality."

How difficult it must be in our present circumstances, to gain certain and exact information, you will easily perceive: But enough is known, and more than enough, to shew how justly the high consolations of that glorious subject, which we have been contemplating, may be applied to the present solemn occasion. From what is certain with relation to him, we may presume to say, that after he had adorned the gospel by so honourable a life, in such a conspicuous station, God seems to have condescended, as with his own hand, to raise him an illustrious theatre, on which he might die a venerable and amiable *Spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men* *; balancing to his native land by such an exit, the loss of what future services it could have expected, from a constitution so much broken as his was, by the fatigues of his campaign in Flanders, where by his indefatigable services in a very extreme season he contracted an illness, from which he never recovered.

On the whole therefore, whatever cause we have, as indeed we have great cause, to sympathize with his wounded family, and with his wounded country; and how decent soever it may be, like David, to take up our lamentation over *The mighty fallen, and the* brightest *weapons of* our *war perished* †; and oh, how naturally might some of us adopt the preceding words too! Yet after all, let us endeavour to summon up a spirit, like that with which he bore the loss of friends, eminent for their goodness and usefulness. And while *We glorify God in him* ‡, as on so many accounts we have reason to do, let us be animated by such an example to a resolution of continuing like him, *stedfast* in our duty, amidst desertion and danger, and all the terrors that can beset us around. As he, having been so eminently *faithful unto death*, has undoubtedly *received a crown of life*, which shines with distinguished lustre, among those *Who are come out of much tribulation* §; let us be courageous *Followers of him*, and of all the glorious company of those, *who through*

* 1 Cor. iv. 9. † 2 Sam. i. 27. ‡ Gal. i. 24. § Rev. vii. 14.

*faith and patience inherit the promises* *. Then may we be able to enter into the comfort and spirit of them all, and of this promise in particular; and shall not be discouraged, though we are called to *Endure a great fight of afflictions* †, or even to sacrifice our lives, in defence of our religion and liberties: Since in this cause we know, if we should fall like him, even *To die is gain* ‡. We are assured upon the best authority, that as he *Fought the good fight* with so heroic a fortitude, and *finished his course* with so steady a tenor, and *kept the faith* with so unshaken a resolution, *there is laid up* for him *a crown of* brighter *glory* than he has yet received, *which the Lord the righteous Judge will give* unto him *in that* great expected *day: And* we know, that it shall be given, *not unto him only*, nor only to those who have had an opportunity of distinguishing themselves by the most heroic services or sufferings in the cause of their divine leader, *but unto all them that love his appearance* §. Amen.

* Heb. vi. 12. † Heb. x. 32. ‡ Phil. i. 21. § 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

# A HYMN

SUNG AFTER THE SERMON.

I.

HARK! 'Tis our heav'nly Leader's voice
From his triumphant seat:
'Midst all the war's tumultuous noise,
How pow'rful, and how sweet!

II.

"Fight on, my faithful band," he cries,
"Nor fear the mortal blow:
"Who first in such a warfare dies,
"Shall speediest victory know.

III.

"I have my days of combat known,
"And in the dust was laid:
"But thence I mounted to my throne,
"And glory crowns my head.

IV.

"That throne, that glory, you shall share;
"My hands the crown shall give:
"And you the sparkling honours wear,
"While God himself shall live."

V.

Lord, 'tis enough! Our bosoms glow
With courage, and with love:
Thine hand shall bear thy soldiers thro',
And raise their heads above.

VI.

My soul, while deaths beset me round,
Erects her ardent eyes;
And longs, thro' some illustrious wound,
To rush and seize the prize.

# SERMON V.

## CHRIST'S

### MYSTERIOUS CONDUCT TO BE UNFOLDED HEREAFTER:

*A Funeral Sermon occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Mr. James Shepherd who died May 19, 1746, Ætat. 22. Preached at Northampton, May 25.*

John xiii. 7. ——— *What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.*

OUR Lord Jesus Christ has in all ages taken care to exercise the faith, the patience, and submission of his people: And he has done it, while carrying on the kindest designs towards them, and while he has been acting in the strictest prosecution of those designs. He was now engaged in a work of astonishing condescension and goodness: The disciples saw it with amazement, that he, the Son of God, and the heir of all things, the promised Messiah, the King of God's church, should condescend to wash their feet. Peter could not bear the thoughts of permitting it: And that occasioned the words I have now been reading; in which we have a general truth delivered by our Lord, which it is profitable for us frequently to reflect upon, and the reflection is now peculiarly seasonable.

The words presented themselves to my mind, as soon as I heard, to my unspeakable surprise, the melancholy tidings of the death of my dear pupil, and friend and brother, who but the very last sacrament-day was with us at the table of the Lord, and who but a few days before had been speaking to us in his name. When I heard, that God had by a sudden stroke, which left his friends in a mixture of astonishment and distress, taken away one so richly adorned with gifts and graces, so well qualified for public usefulness, just as he was entering upon it, just as he was unanimously chosen to preside over a numerous and important congregation, and was within a few weeks more to have gone from us to have taken up his stated residence among them;

struck with the surprise, I say, and with the anguish of this unexpected blow, which yet it was natural to consider as coming from the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great Sovereign of his church, and *Holds the keys of the unseen world and of death**, these words immediately presented themselves to me: And therefore I determined to offer you some plain and serious meditations upon them; and shall accordingly raise three observations from them, which I shall endeavour to illustrate and improve.

I. That there may be some things in the conduct of the blessed Redeemer towards his people, which they may not at present be able fully to understand.

II. That nevertheless the time will come, when they shall have much clearer views of the reasons of his dispensations.

III. That in the expectation of this, it is highly fit they should acquiesce in what he does, how unknown soever the reasons may at present be. These several observations I shall briefly speak to, and then,

IV. Apply all this to the present occasion.

I. There may be some things in the conduct of our Blessed Redeemer towards his people now, which they may not at present be able fully to understand.—It is a supposable case,——and when we come to consider the thing, it is also evidently fact.

1. It is in the nature of things a very supposable case; as will appear, when we consider,——who the Lord Jesus Christ is,——who and what we are,——and the relation in which he stands to us as our Lord and Sovereign.

Consider who he is; no less a person than the only begotten Son of God, *In whom are hid all the treasures of* divine *wisdom and knowledge* †: And can it be thought wonderful, that the *counsels of God are unsearchable?* We know, that his nature is so; for *Who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty to perfection*‡? And well may we conclude, his schemes must be so; and therefore say with the apostle Paul; *Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out*§! *The God of Israel*, and *the Saviour, is* oftentimes *a God that hideth himself* ‖. *His way is in the sea, and his path in the deep waters* ¶.—The angels themselves cannot trace all

* Rev. i. 18. † Col. ii. 3. ‡ Job xi. 7. § Rom. xi. 33.
‖ Isa. xlv. 15. ¶ Psal. lxxvii. 19.

his footsteps, and how much less can we poor frail mortals, so often *perplexed* in our own counsels, so often brought as it were to *our wit's end*, with difficulties and entanglements, that arise from the management of our own little affairs, in this narrow and contracted circle! Can we expect then to fathom his depths? to comprehend his schemes? to form a perfect judgment of his royal, his imperial plan?—*How little a portion* is it, that *is known of him**, who is the king of all the world, and *Head over all things to the church*†? God has subjected to him *all things visible and invisible*, nor are we capable of discerning how one wheel touches another in this complex scheme; how the concerns of one province of his kingdom may be interwoven, as it were, with those of another; or what curious wheels may be within other wheels, and give them a motion which we know not of, and which it would be very unfit we should know. It is a labyrinth intricate in proportion to the art and design with which it is wrought up. We may in reason then expect it, should be thus. And again,

2. It is also what we see in fact to be so. We know not in numberless instances what our Lord intends: We know not what the event will be. And we do in fact see, that though all things are under the government of Christ, yet many things happen, which we should have imagined his kindness and tenderness to his people would have prevented, as we are sure that his power could do it.

We often see his dearest children afflicted; we see the most holy, humble, watchful, spiritual souls often drooping and dejected; when yet we know, that he could in a moment *pour in the oil of gladness* to heal their wounds, and *cause their faces to shine* and their hearts to overflow with a divine joy.

We see generous and public spirited christians, who could delight with a liberal hand to relieve his poor members, themselves poor, themselves perhaps, after many a worthy service reduced to need that assistance from others, which they have once so readily imparted; though we know, that all riches are in the hand of Christ, that all events and all hearts are under his influence.

We see most useful and excellent persons removed and taken off, many of them in the prime of life, some in the midst of their usefulness, and some in the very beginnings of it; and these, not only persons amiable and exemplary in private life, but of public character, adorned by the hand of Christ himself with much

* Job xxvi. 14. † Eph. i. 22.

of his own image, and with that rich furniture, which qualifies them for being, as we should imagine, most proper instruments to bring in souls to himself, and greatly to build up his languishing church and interest. We see some of them perhaps cut off before they have made any public appearance at all; and others, when they have just began to speak in the name of the Lord: And with regard to others, *He weakens their strength in the midst of the way* *; diseases arrest them, and make them prisoners; and threaten, perhaps, in a little while longer to bring them down to the dust with their departed brethren: Yet we know, Jesus is the universal *Lord, to whom belong the issues from death* †; that he knows all the secret springs of life, and all the secret sources of disease, and could easily by one powerful word remove the causes of the complaint, or direct to means most efficacious for recovery.

We see churches made desolate by the enemy, whom we know he could restrain; we see them polluted with scandals, which we know he could prevent; we see their numbers diminished, though we know that he could easily *Send out his spirit, and renew the face of them* ‡, and cause many to enter for one that he removes: Yea, we see among those whom we must hope to be his *little flock*, many divisions, many errors, many imprudences and follies, that alienate the hearts of christians one from another, and bring religion into disgrace, though Christ could easily let in beams of light which should guide into truth, beams of love which should sweetly unite and cement multitudes, so that they should sensibly be one in him.—So mysterious is his conduct, and so different the face of his poor church, as well as the state of many of its members, from what we should expect it to have been under the government of such an Head. *What he does, we know not now.* But then it was observed,

II. That nevertheless the time will come, when we shall have much clearer views of the reasons of his dispensations—— *Thou shalt know hereafter.* And to illustrate this I would observe,——that sometimes these reasons open, even while we continue in this world;——but we may expect to know it in many other instances, when the present scenes are closed, and we enter on *that which is within the veil.*

1. Sometimes the reasons of Christ's mysterious dispensations open upon us, even while we are here in this world.

So in this instance that the text refers to, it was but a few minutes, and our Lord laid aside *the towel with which he was*

* Psal. cii. 23. † Psal. lxviii. 20. ‡ Psal. civ. 30.

*girded*, and sat down and told them, why *He had washed their feet*; that it was to teach them to *wash one another's feet**; that is, to promote their humility, and their readiness to *serve one another in love*, even in the most condescending offices they might have an opportunity of performing. And thus in many other instances, though the great end of Christ's dispensations be in regard to the eternal world, yet there are subordinate ends which may be answered here; and when we come to find they are answered, we may learn the design of providence in these means which we did not before understand. As when the disciples saw the honourable manner in which Christ dismissed the poor Canaanitish woman at last†, they saw the reasons why he seemed to neglect her so long; it was, that her faith might be displayed by the trial, that they might see she was a more excellent woman than they could otherwise have imagined; and that the mercy might be sweeter to her in proportion to the delay.

And do I not now speak to the experience of some that hear me?——Cannot many of you reflect with me upon strange dispensations of providence, which have at length produced the happiest effects? It is a known story of a person, who having lost all his wealth, was led to apply himself to philosophy, and in consequence of that, attained such a government of himself, such wisdom, and such reputation, as made him abundantly happier than he ever had been; so as to make him say, "I had been undone, if I had not been undone." And thus perhaps one and another of us may say, "The Lord took away my parents when I was young, and I thought I had lost my only friends: But he raised up those for me, who did more and better for me than my parents could have done, and shewed his special love and care in *Taking me up when my father and my mother forsook me*‡."

Another may say, "In younger life he exercised me with many disappointments, he stripped me of many of my comforts, and withered many of my hopes: But I found *It good to bear the yoke in my youth*§: And by unthought of turns, it may be, in relative life he has done much better for me, than with my fond passions I should have done for myself."

"He has been pleased," may a third say, "to take away my dear children, perhaps several of them successively, and those of them that were peculiarly the delight of my eyes: But

* John xiii. 14. † Mat. xv. 28. ‡ Psal. xxvii. 10. § Lam. iii. 27.

he has drawn my heart more powerfully to himself by it, and he is better to me than ten children."

"He has blasted the work of my hands," may another say, "I have insensibly lost, perhaps what I painfully got; or I have been stripped of some considerable part of my possessions at once: But my poverty has enriched me; I have learned the vanity of the world more, and have been more fully convinced that it cannot be my happiness."

"My constitution has been much impaired," may another say, "I have passed solitary sabbaths, I have known a great deal of pain and languishing: But it has taught me to submit to my father's will; it has directed my eyes to that world, where *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick* *, and where I shall be fixed as a *Pillar in the temple of my God* †."

"I would not have been without afflictions," may they all say; "nor without this and that particular affliction," may each perhaps reply, "upon any terms. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness has afflicted me* ‡: Thou hast *Humbled me*, thou hast taught me *to know what was in my heart* §; and I know by my afflictions, more than prosperity might have taught me, of the love that is in thine heart to me." But then,

2. We may expect to know the reasons of Christ's dispensations in many other instances, when we shall come into the future world. *In thy light shall we see light* ‖: And I doubt not, but in the heavenly state many circumstances will concur to give us a much better acquaintance with the methods of the divine dealings, than it is possible for us to attain upon earth:—Our eye will be strengthened;——our prospect will be extended;——our company will be improved;——and our Lord may perhaps give us plainer lessons by immediate discovery from himself.

In heaven, the eye of the soul will be strengthened, and our faculties raised to unutterable degrees. All indolence will be done away, and we shall be awakened into everlasting attention. All prejudices will be quite removed; and we shall be willing to admit truth in all its lustre, and to follow it wherever it may lead us.

Our prospect there will be enlarged, and we shall have much more extensive views of things: For we shall see the conduct of Christ, in its influence upon scenes, that lie at present

* Isa. xxxiii. 24. † Rev. iii. 12. ‡ Psal. cxix. 75. § Deut. viii. 2.
‖ Psal. xxxvi. 9.

quite out of our sight. We see Christ's administrations now, as they regard this earth alone; but then we shall see them, as they regard heaven. We may then perhaps see, that there was a certain post of service to be filled above, which required just such a one as divine grace had made this or that young person, who might indeed have been very fit to have served the church below, but for whom God meant much higher and better things.

Our companions in glory may also very probably assist us by their wise and good observations, when we come to make the providence of God here upon earth, under the guidance and direction of the Lord Jesus Christ, the subject of our mutual converse.

And it is impossible for us to say, how immediately the Lord Jesus Christ may himself interpose in giving us plainer lessons, and clearing up his conduct to us. By direct and immediate revelation he may communicate to us what his schemes were, and shew us how they were going on in a direct harmonious manner, as the planets in the visible heavens, when they seem to us to *stand still*, or to *go backwards*. In the mean time, let me observe,

III. That it is highly fit we should acquiesce in what Christ does, how unknown soever the reasons of it may be to us. And that, upon these two plain and certain principles,——that we know, that in all he does his ends are graciously directed,—— and that his means are wisely chosen.

1. We know, that his ends are graciously directed.

We know, that he intends in all he does, the honour of God, and the good of all his people. Can we make any doubt of this? One would think, we really did: And yet we know, that he has given them the most gracious promises, even of a glorious resurrection, and of a blessed immortality; and that he has loved them so well, that he has died for them, has shed his own precious and invaluable blood for their redemption and salvation. And can we, after this, allow ourselves to suspect him? Can we doubt, that he intends to make his people for ever happy? And intending this, can he fail to effect it in the properest manner?—— Surely I may add,

2. We know, that his means are wisely chosen.

Can we have any room to question this? Is he not the incarnate wisdom of God? And can you entertain any suspicion of him? If you trust not faith alone, trust sense. Look up to the heavens; look down to the earth: Behold, how wisely all is ordered, in the growth of such a variety of plants, in the provision

that is made for such a multitude of animals of various kinds, in the subserviency of all to the subsistence and delight of human life; and then say, Does this look like any deficiency in wisdom? And are not these things the work of Christ? Did he not lay the plan, and execute it? Were not *All things created by him, whether visible or invisible*?* And will you still doubt, whether he who made, and who governs and preserves all things, is wise enough to conduct your affairs, or not? Methinks our Lord may justly expostulate with the suspicious, with the complaining christian, "*Oh thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt*†*?* Whom wilt thou trust, if thou trustest not me? Wilt thou trust thine own wisdom? alas! how often has it deceived thee! Wilt thou trust thy self love? alas! how utterly has it undone thee! Can my Father trust me with all the infinite concerns of his glory and kingdom; and canst thou not trust me with thy little all? Did I die for thee! did I pour out my blood for the redemption of thy immortal soul! and canst thou imagine, I will not take care of it? And if I do, will it not be safe? Or if thou canst confide in me, that I will take care of thy soul, and make it both safe and happy, canst thou not trust thine estate with me, thy health, thy reputation, thy usefulness, thy children, thy friends? Are these things more than that soul, which I have so dearly purchased, which I have so tenderly received, which I have so constantly watched over, and in which I have already made such a change for the better, that if thou wouldst be just to thyself and me, thou needest but to look upon it, and mightest find an argument from what it is, in comparison of what it once was, to trust me for every thing else?"

"Lord," should each of us by this time, say, "It is enough! It is more than enough! I am ashamed of my weakness and folly. *Behold, here I am, do with me as thou wilt!* Dispose of me, and my concerns, just according to thine own pleasure! I will not object one word, I will not indulge one thought of suspicion: I will say, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*‡. I will keep mine eye upon thine hand; I will sometimes look back to thy cross, and sometimes look up to thy throne; and I will not only be contented, but thankful. Yea, Lord, I will see what I can do, towards obeying in the midst of all my troubles that great command of thine, which, great as it is, was a command fit for such a Redeemer to give, *Rejoice evermore*§*: Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice*‖."—And now, after what has been said, I would conclude,

* Col. i. 16. † Mat. xiv. 31. ‡ 1 Sam. iii. 18. § 1 Thess. v. 16. ‖ Phil. iv. 4.

IV. With applying all this to the present occasion, by hinting at some ends, which we may suppose our Lord to have had in view in this solemn transaction of his providence, which occasioned the discourse I have now been delivering.

Let us lay down this as the foundation, that it is the hand of Christ; that he has turned the key; that he has taken away his young servant, whom he raised up here, whom he called so early by his grace, whom he taught to pray when he was but a child; and to pray in such a manner, that I will take the liberty publicly to tell you, "that the account I had of a prayer of his, overheard when he little thought it by a dear friend, almost seventeen years ago, that is, when he was but about five years old, had its influence in engaging me to come and settle in this place." It was from Christ that he received that steadiness, that tenderness, that ripe experience in the things of God, which made his private and his public labours so remarkably agreeable to the most judicious christians of this society, and of other societies. It was the grace of Christ, which bore him unhurt through so many temptations, by which others have been ensnared and dishonoured, their characters sunk, and their usefulness diminished, if not destroyed. And let us not imagine, that the messenger of death came to him without a commission from the great Lord of life. Let us not imagine, that his spirit was called out of time into eternity without the voice of a Redeemer, or that the important doors of the invisible world were opened without his hand. Christ has taken him away: And he had no doubt his reasons for it: Reasons, many of them perhaps unsearchable to us, yet we may conjecture as to some of them: And it may be profitable for a few remaining minutes to dwell upon the view; the rather, as so many breaches have been made, so many of this kind too, which have fallen under the notice of many of us. Particularly,

1. Our Lord by such a providence might intend to teach us, how little he needs any of our services.

Our dear departed friend seemed indeed a *Vessel of honour fitted for his master's use*;* but he is *broken in pieces*, and we are ready to say with the afflicted church of old, *The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter†!* But herein our great Lord displays his royalty: He can form the most promising instruments of service; and can lay them aside, and carry on his cause without them. Let not then any of

* 2 Tim. ii. 21. † Lam. iv. 2.

us imagine ourselves, or each other, to be necessary to him. He will, if he pleases, do us the honour to use us: If not, he will immediately lay us by in the grave. We, and those who esteem us most, and who love us best, should submit, and say, *Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are we in the hand of the Lord our God* *. And it is fit it should be so; for we are weak as clay, and at the same time also are of as little value, and even less than the dust of the earth when compared with him. Again,

2. It may be the design of our Lord by such a providence as this, to teach us to cease from man.

We are instructed by it, not to depend too much upon any of our surviving brethren and friends: For it is the language of this providence, *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of* †? *God changes our countenance, and sends us away* ‡. But a few months ago, who was more likely to have continued than dear Mr. Shepherd! But God sent a mortal distemper upon him in the night, and his friends in the morning found him senseless; and he spoke no more, and hardly moved any more, till he died. Such is *every man in his best estate!* Thus may we fall, and those on whom we most depend. *Lord, what do we* then *wait for?* with regard to ourselves, with regard to thy church, *our hope is in thee* §. Further,

3. Our Lord might thus intend in a peculiar manner to exercise our submission and resignation to his wise and gracious will.

We should look upon the death of every friend in this view, as a call to us to acknowledge his sovereignty over life and death. *Behold, he taketh away, and who can hinder him? Or who shall say unto him, What doest thou* ‖? And the more touching the case is, the deeper ought our submission to be; because the greater is that natural tendency which we are ready to feel in our minds, to rise against and to dispute his determinations. Particularly, when God takes away from aged christians a young friend who has been the delight of their eyes, whom they have tenderly nursed up from his infancy, just when they most needed his assistance, and he was most capable of giving it, as well as strongly inclined and determined to do it: When God takes away, not only a young minister, of eminent and distinguished abilities, but one who even from his childhood had been bred up amongst us; one, who had constantly attended

* Jer. xviii. 6. † Isa. ii. 22. ‡ Job xiv. 20. § Psal. xxxix. 7.
‖ Job ix. 12.

with us every sabbath-day on public worship, with that endearment of mutual respect and affection on his part and ours, which must be the result of so intimate a relation; one, of whom we have so particularly thought when we have been acknowledging the divine goodness in *Raising up of our sons for prophets, and of our young men for Nazarites* *; it is then particularly seasonable, that we should struggle with our own hearts to say, *Thy will be done!* Once more,

4. It may be the design of such a providence as this, *to quicken us all* in our work, and especially his surviving brethren.

Had it been the death of a stranger in such circumstances, it might have *quickened us*: To see a young person taken thus away; going to bed at night tolerably well, for that was the case, though with some complaint, yet in no such immediate danger as should give any peculiar alarm, and then found in his bed the next morning speechless and senseless, and continuing without perception, and in a great measure without motion, till he expired. I repeat these circumstances again, that young inattentive minds may be struck with them.——But it is particularly striking, when we consider it is one, whom we so intimately knew; one, with whom so many of us have been conversing and praying almost every day for many years, as well as worshipping every sabbath, and communicating every sacrament-day. May we all hear that voice, which cries, *Be ye also ready* †! Especially, may we attend to it, who are forming for, or engaged in the ministerial work!

My dear brethren, and much beloved charge, suffer *the word of exhortation.* You knew this amiable and excellent youth in a most intimate manner: Let me briefly recommend to you the many things, which you saw exemplary in him:—— His constancy and reverence in attending divine worship, both in public and private;——His diligence in business;——His steadiness and regularity in conduct;——His prudent and honourable care to avoid silly and extravagant expences;——His solicitude to take every opportunity of improving in every branch of learning, that was taught where he attended; especially what related most directly to his sacred profession;—— His unwearied application to the study of the scripture, and continued watchfulness for every opportunity of improving it: ——And above all, his zeal for the glory of God, and for the gospel of Christ, and its glorious and peculiarly distinguishing truths. I heartily wish each of you, who are to appear under

* Amos ii. 11. † Mat. xxiv. 44.

such a public character, the like judgment and solidity in your compositions, the like grave, serious, unaffected, and experimental strain, the same solicitude to do good both to the bodies and souls of men, which made his work his pleasure. You see, how short his career of service here has been: Yours may perhaps be as short, and yet shorter. However that be, I pray God, that you may fulfil it as worthily as he did! And then, should I also see your early deaths, I should congratulate rather than condole you; and esteem such a speedy removal, as a peculiar token of your Lord's favour to you, however, I might lament it as an awful stroke on those of us who should survive.

I trust, that his dear aged relatives have that better world in too near a prospect to stand in need of much condolence. May God sanctify every dark dispensation of his providence to them, and to us, and give us faith and patience to wait that day, when the last veil shall be taken off, and the terms on which we shall be restored to each other shall leave us no room to mourn, that we have been for a while separated, with whatever circumstances of surprise and distress that separation may have been attended! Amen.

# HYMN

## ON THE OCCASION.

I.

JESUS, we own thy Sov'reign hand:
Thy faithful care we own:
Wisdom and love are all thy ways,
When most to us unknown.

II.

By thee the springs of life were form'd,
And by thy breath are broke;
And good is every awful word,
Our gracious Lord has spoke.

III.

To thee we yield our comforts up;
To thee our lives resign;
In straits and dangers, rich, and safe,
If we and ours are thine.

IV.

Thy saints in earlier life remov'd,
In sweeter accents sing;
And bless the swiftness of the flight,
That bore them to their king.

V.

The burdens of the lengthen'd day
With patience we would bear;
For evening's welcome hour shall shew,
We were our Master's care.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

## MEDITATIONS

ON THE

TEARS OF JESUS OVER THE GRAVE OF LAZARUS:

*A Funeral Sermon preached at St. Albans, Dec.* 16, 1750. *On occasion of the much lamented Death of the late Rev. Samuel Clark, D. D. who died the 4th of December, in the 66th Year of his Age.*

TO

MRS. SARAH CLARK,

THE WORTHY RELICT

OF MY EVER HONOURED FRIEND AND FATHER

THE LATE REV. DOCTOR CLARK,

THIS SERMON

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

AS A SINCERE AND AFFECTIONATE,

THO' INCONSIDERABLE TOKEN

OF TENDER SYMPATHY WITH HER,

AND OF INDELIBLE VENERATION

FOR THE EXEMPLARY CHARACTER OF THE

DEAR DECEASED,

BY HER MOST OBLIGED

AND FAITHFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

*P. DODDRIDGE.*

*Northampton, Jan.* 7, 1750-1.

# SERMON VI.

John xi. 35.—*Jesus wept.*

THE only begotten Son of God, while he sojourned in human flesh, passed through a sad variety of calamities, and on the whole bore all that a human heart, untainted with guilt, and untouched with remorse of conscience, could suffer; that he might learn to pity us more affectionately under the like sorrows; that he might lay in for us a stock of divine consolations; and especially, that he might teach us by his sacred example to avoid the opposite and fatal extremes, of *Despising the chastening of the Lord*, and *fainting when we are rebuked by him* *. Let us *learn of him;* and while we feel our afflictions like men, we shall bear them as the children of God, and the heirs of glory.

We here view our blessed Redeemer in a circumstance, in which most of us have frequently, and alas! very lately been; and in which, should our lives be prolonged, we may again and again be; a circumstance, which is the common lot of mortality, and must of course be the most frequent affliction of those who are richest in dear and valuable friends, and which will be most tenderly felt by those who best deserve to enjoy them. It is the sad tribute, and I had almost said, the sad equivalent, which in these regions of death we pay for loving and being beloved. We see Jesus approaching the new grave of a friend; of such a friend, as providence and grace had concurred to render, in some measure, worthy of those precious and honourable tears, which were now dropped upon his tomb. It was Lazarus of Bethany. We know the tender story too well, to need a large rehearsal of it in moments so precious as these. We know, that when Jesus drew near to Bethany soon after the interment of his deceased friend, and was going with his sisters and a train of other mourners to his grave, he *wept.*——We shall enquire into the cause of these tears,——shall consider the useful lessons we may naturally learn from them,——and then shall give the few

* Heb. xii. 5.

remaining moments of our time to what is peculiar to the sad occasion of our present assembly, the death of the truly reverend, pious, and amiable Doctor Clark; concerning whom I think I may justly say, and your consciences will attest how justly, that we have personally known few, over whose tomb Christ would more probably have *wept*, had he stood near it in mortal flesh. May this seasonable review of his tears over Lazarus, regulate and sanctify those, which so naturally flow from our eyes in the present circumstance, where almost every object we behold calls them up afresh!

I. Let us consider on what accounts we may probably suppose that our blessed Redeemer now *wept*.

All we can do to answer this enquiry is, to take an attentive survey of the circumstances of the case, so far as our information reaches; that we may observe what occurred in them, proper to have impressed a wise and benevolent mind. For though we pretend not to limit the infinitely more capacious views of our divine Master, yet we may assure ourselves that nothing material and important was passed over by him without due regard.

On these principles we may naturally observe,—that our Lord was now near a grave,—the grave of a pious and amiable friend,—surrounded with a train of affectionate mourners,—and with some obstinate sinners in his view, who were bringing upon themselves dreadful and final destruction.

1. Our Lord was now going to visit a grave; and that might awaken some meltings of compassion.

He was coming to a place, where the king of terrors had lately erected a new trophy, and given a specimen of his universal triumph. Now had Christ been a stranger to the person of Lazarus, it might have touched him to think of his untimely fate, for untimely it seems to have been; to have seen the sad monuments of mortality before his eyes, and to have thought, "This is the sepulchre of Lazarus: He, who but a little while ago was in the prime and vigour of his days, and in the ample enjoyment of what earth could afford to make him happy *, is now the prisoner of the grave. *The residue of his*

* I have here taken it for granted, that Lazarus was a young man, and in prosperous circumstances of life. We may probably conclude the former, as we only read of his sisters, but of no wife or children, and from his living so long after this, as tradition tells us he did. The latter seems very evident, not only from their numerous acquaintance at Jerusalem, John xi. 19. But also from the splendid entertainment afterwards mentioned, John xii. 2, 3. Compare Luke x. 38, and seq.

*days is cut off in the midst* *; and how many purposes are broken! how many hopes are blasted! How melancholy a change from yonder elegant and pleasant mansion, to this house of darkness and of silence, from the cheerful converse of his affectionate sisters, and these numerous friends who are fondly prolonging their attendance though the rites of his funeral are ended! He who was thus beloved and caressed, is already brought to say *To corruption, Thou art my Father*; and *to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister* †."

"Sad change!" might any of us naturally have said on such an occasion; "melancholy catastrophe! not of Lazarus alone, but of the whole human nature! For *This is the end of all men* ‡; this *the house appointed for all living* §." Here their magnificence and power, their beauty and vigour, their learning and wisdom, be they ever so remarkable, must ere long, mingle with meanness and indigence, deformity and weakness, ignorance and folly. Here the human frame, that masterpiece of the divine contrivance, which wears so much of the image of its Maker, must ere long be thrown aside *As a broken vessel in which there is no pleasure* ‖: And all the present generation of men, and all that are to arise in future ages and most distant nations, shall in their turns lie as low as Lazarus. Such are the awful monuments of the divine displeasure for that first offence; when *As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so* the sentence of *death passed upon all men, as all had sinned in him* ¶. Hither, even to the darkness, the abasement, the putrefaction of the grave, are they all travelling through a road of disappointment and vanity, of pain and sorrow. Thus are the original glories of man tarnished and withered, and his paradise turned into a Golgotha! And all this to the apostate creature is only the *beginning* of punishment and misery, did not Sovereign grace interpose for his deliverance.

Who can say, that such natural and obvious thoughts as these, did not now arise in the mind of the blessed Jesus? Who can think it impossible, that he should thus from the tomb of Lazarus take a view of this wide ruin, and drop a compassionate tear over the various miseries of mortal man? But such reflections as these, might have arisen from the funeral of one, who had been an intire stranger to him: We are therefore farther to consider,

* Isa. xxxviii. 10. † Job xvii. 14. ‡ Eccl. vii. 2. § Job xxx. 23.
‖ Psal. xxxi. 12. Jer. xxii. 28. ¶ Rom. v. 12.

2. That our Lord was now attending the grave of a pious and amiable friend; and on that account it would be very natural for him to *weep.*

The evangelist takes particular care to tell us, ver. 5. that *Jesus loved Lazarus, and Martha, and Mary;* nor do we read of any family, in which he more frequently lodged when he came up to Jerusalem, or where he conversed with more freedom and endearment. We may therefore assure ourselves, that on the death of Lazarus the remembrance of this intimate friendship would be recollected by the faithful and affectionate Jesus with due regard: And accordingly we see, that when he would inform his followers of this mournful providence, he uses this kind language, ver. 11. *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.* Where by the way we may observe, that he not only speaks of him by the appellation of friend, but represents his death as a *sleep;* as if there were something in the word *dead,* so harsh and doleful that he hardly knew how to connect it with so dear a name *. Now on the same principles it is natural to conclude, that when our Lord came to the house of his deceased friend, and saw the apartments or gardens, in which he had often conversed with him to their mutual delight; when he reviewed the places, in which they had taken sweet counsel together, and from whence they had gone to the house of God in company; the recollection must naturally awaken a tender sorrow, not unlike what we feel on such an occasion.

Christ could not fail to recollect, what a friend Lazarus had been to him and to his interests, and according to his ability to the village of Bethany, and the city of Jerusalem, whence so many came to pay their last office of respect to his remains. Had he been employed in the ministerial work, as I think ecclesiastical history tells us, that after his resurrection he was, his fidelity and zeal under that character would, no doubt, have been tenderly recollected. As it was, we may assure ourselves, that if Christ will another day acknowledge so cheap a kindness as a *Cup of cold water* bestowed on *a disciple in his name* †, he could not possibly forget, how hospitably he had himself been entertained by Lazarus; how cheerfully, and how thankfully, that generous man had opened, not only his house, but his heart to him, and to the least of his ser-

* So as Mr. Rollin has observed with his usual elegance and propriety, when Homer describes Antilochus as bringing word to Achilles of the death of his friend Patroclus, he makes him only say, Κεῖται Πάτροκλος, Patroclus is fallen. Roll. Man. de Etud. Vol. i. p. 407.

† Mat. x. 42.

vants, who no doubt had been cordially welcome to him for his master's sake. A tear over the grave of such a friend might have seemed but an equitable tribute, had it fallen from any other eye; and a common spectator would have thought of no farther cause. Accordingly the Jews who were present, made this reflection upon it, ver. 36. *Behold, how he loved him!* which by the way seems to intimate, that it was not only a drop or two, which silently stole down the cheeks of our Lord, but that it was a copious shower; and as before it is expressly said, that *he groaned in spirit*, so perhaps some strong gestures might concur to express his grief. And though the immediate prospect of the resurrection of Lazarus would administer a relief peculiar to this case; yet the thoughts of those agonies through which he had passed, of the melancholy situation in which the body now lay, and perhaps of the death he was again to encounter, and from which he should not arise till the heavens were no more, might all contribute to melt the compassionate heart of the blessed Jesus; especially in concurrence with what we are next to mention: For,

3. Our Lord certainly *wept*, out of compassion to surviving relatives and friends, whom he saw almost overwhelmed with their sorrow.

This reason is expressly assigned in the 33d verse: *When Jesus saw her*, that is, Mary, *weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in spirit, and was troubled.* The original expression * properly signifies, he troubled or afflicted himself; that is, he gave the reins in some measure to his grief; he allowed a set of sorrowful ideas to arise and lodge in his mind, which he could at pleasure have banished or exchanged: And thus he set himself to practise that lesson, which he afterwards taught by his apostle, of *Weeping with them that weep* † !

And indeed, it was in this respect a very moving scene, which may justly demand a tear from us in the review of it. Had the deceased left behind him an affectionate widow, who might have seemed but half to survive, while what she esteemed the better part of herself had been torn away; or had a train of lovely children appeared, in such various gradations of filial sorrow as their respective ages might have admitted, like tender flowers drooping, their heads surcharged with rain; we may reasonably conclude, a suitable sympathy would have been extended to them, and an additional tear have been given to each. But

* ἐταραξεν ἑαυτὸν. † Rom. xii. 15.

here were the two pious sisters, whom friendship and grace had concurred to join in such endearing bonds to the deceased, and to Jesus himself. The Jews also were weeping; partly for Lazarus, partly for his sisters, and partly for themselves; and perhaps some of them, for that sorrow which Jesus himself discovered in his aspect and deportment, before these tears fell. Now we cannot wonder, that this penetrated the heart of Christ yet more deeply, when he saw grief reflected from breast to breast, and each affectionate friend in that mournful assembly bearing, as it were, the burden of all.——What I now see before me, what I persuade myself we all feel, gives me so lively an idea of this part of my subject, that it will scarce permit me to pursue it.——I will only add, that if there were any of the spectators then present, who did not weep with the rest, and bore no part in so general a lamentation, even they might perhaps be an occasion of yet greater distress to him, who always formed the truest estimate of things, and saw through every fallacious appearance by which our ignorance and credulity are daily misled: Which leads me to add,

4. The Lord Jesus Christ himself might justly *weep*, to think of that dreadful ruin which was coming on some present for their continued impenitency and unbelief.

He who saw what was in man, undoubtedly discerned that malignity of heart, which so soon bore some of them to contrive the death of Lazarus *, that he might not remain a living testimony of Christ's miraculous power; and which would so soon lead them to reject the yet more important evidence of his mission, produced by his own resurrection from the dead, expressly foretold and appealed to in that view. He saw all the dreadful consequences of this obstinacy, in their utter ruin by the Romans: And as *Hell was open to him, and destruction had no covering* †, he foresaw distinctly the horrors of their guilty spirits, when they entered these gloomy regions; and the increasing horrors that should seize them in the judgment-day, when *In their graves* they should *hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth to the resurrection of* eternal *damnation* ‡. And though our Lord could not but on the whole approve of that vengeance, by which a righteous God would plead his cause, and revenge the quarrel of his rejected gospel; yet some sentiments of pity mingled themselves with the view, as when he had lately *Wept over Jerusalem* §: Just as a humane and compassionate judge looks with compassion on those criminals, whom

* John xii. 10. † Job xxvi. 6. ‡ John v. 28, 29. § Luke xix. 41.

for wise, and on the whole, benevolent reasons, he gives up to destruction.——But I mention this only incidentally, as it is not hinted at in the context, and has no immediate connection with the event which is now so ready to engross our thoughts.—We have seen the cause of these tears; and now,

II. Let us consider to what purposes of practical edification we may improve them.

The following reflections may naturally arise from the subject; and I hope, it may be useful to dwell a while upon each of them.

1. This may serve to vindicate a compassionate temper from the imputation of contemptible weakness.

The fierceness of some minds, and the indolence of others, leads them to despise those whom they frequently see under the impression of tender passions. But wherefore should they despise them? Surely when God implanted in our nature these melting emotions of soul, he intended them for some valuable purpose; and not that we should look upon them as weeds, to be rooted out of every well cultivated soil. I am sure, we cannot learn any such stoical maxims from the word of God; for there, not only the most eminent saints, but many of the bravest heroes, are described with the softest sentiments of humanity about them, and are frequently painted in tears*. What greater names has the Old Testament history transmitted to us, than those of Abraham† and Joseph‡, David§ and Jonathan‖, Hezekiah¶ and Jeremiah**? Yet we are told of various occasions on which they wept. And the tears of Paul, that great christian hero, who could so courageously face imprisonment and martyrdom for the cause of truth and goodness, are frequently spoken of, either in his history, or his letters††. But a greater than these is here: *Jesus wept*. In the days of his flesh, he *poured out tears*, not only under the pressure of his own personal sorrow, but sometimes out of compassion for others: And he particularly did it in the instance before us, though he was to receive a public honour, which rendered this day one of the most illustrious of those which preceded his own resurrection.

* So those of Homer and Virgil, are often represented; which plainly shews, that those most judicious discerners of human nature thought, there was nothing in such a turn of mind inconsistent with the most exalted courage and magnanimity.

† Gen. xxiii. 2. ‡ Gen. xlii. 24. xliii. 30. xlvi. 29. l. 1. § 1 Sam. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. i. 12. iii. 32. xiii. 36. xviii. 33. ‖ 1 Sam. xx. 41. ¶ 2 Kings xx. 3. Isa. xxxviii. 3. ** Jer. ix. 1. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. xlviii. 32. Lam. i. 16. ii. 18. †† Acts xx. 19, 31. 2 Cor. ii. 4. Phil. iii. 18.

He behaved in every circumstance of his conduct, with a dignity worthy of his general character, and of the present occasion*; as one equal to the great work to be performed, and no way elevated or transported at the signal honour it did him: Yet, to allude to an expression of Job concerning himself, while he was amongst them with a Majesty beyond that of a king even in his army, he tempered that majesty with the gentlest sympathy which could have been expected from one, whose professed business it was to *Comfort the mourners*†. Surely in this respect, as well as every other, *The disciple is not above his master*‡; nor can those marks of tenderness be a reproach to us, which were not unbecoming in him. In circumstances like these in which *Jesus wept*, tears are so far from being an unmanly weakness, that they may rather be called, as they are by one of the most celebrated of the Roman poets, nostri pars optima sensûs, one of the most amiable parts in the constitution of human nature; which God seems to have provided on purpose, that we might be able to give each other a sensible token of commiseration and affection, which cannot so easily be counterfeited as fond words may; and he has taken care, that while they testify our passions, they should also ease them, and unload the heart when almost ready to sink under its pressure.

2. We may also learn from the preceding discourse, what may be of use to direct our compassion in the most affectionate workings of it.

We well know, that the blessed Jesus had all the passions in the most harmonious order, and that the symmetry of his soul was entirely unbroken. We may therefore assure ourselves, that tears which flow from the considerations on which he shed them, are the drops of wisdom and of virtue.

To weep with him over the grave of a departed friend, especially of one remarkable for piety and usefulness, is most easy and natural. The more difficult task will be, to restrain those tears within such bounds, that they may not swell into a torrent, which will bear down our comforts, our hopes, and our graces. But while they are duly moderated, and submitted to the great Lord of life, we shelter ourselves under the great example of Jesus. And indeed, without such an authority, our sorrows on such an occasion might be vindicated, not only as a tribute of humanity due to the living as well as the dead, but in

* This is most beautifully illustrated by the Rev. Dr. Lardner, in his vindication of this story against Mr. Woolaston's objections; which is written with a spirit of criticism as just and noble, as that of his antagonist was false, invidious, and mean.

†Job xxix. 25. ‡Mat. x. 24.

some degree as a proper expression of our pious humiliation under God's rebuking hand. For nothing is an affliction, any farther than it is felt; and the very end of providence with respect to us would be frustrated, if our hearts were not deeply penetrated and impressed by the stroke.

But let not personal and domestic calamities engross all the tenderness of our souls. Let our compassions spread themselves all abroad, and take in every proper object which may fall under their notice. Let us endeavour to pass through the world, as the friends of God, and of mankind; as those, who have a cordial affection for the whole human species, and being ourselves men, can think no human concern entirely foreign to our hearts. Let us often think of the state of human nature in general; how it is defaced and pained, and wounded even to death: How man grows up to lamentation and mourning; and every age, and station, and circumstance, has its affliction! Even tender and innocent infancy is not excepted; those little helpless strangers in life, though they *Have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression**, are born under the sentence of it. What numbers of them are brought into the world, only to smart, and weep, and die! And in other instances, when the human blossom begins to open, and the beautiful colours discover themselves in the bud, how does it wither before it be fully blown! Children, who have all the charms and all the hopes their early age can admit, seem to have been spared for a few years, only to take a deeper root in a parent's heart, that it might ach and bleed the more, when they are plucked up, sometimes by a sudden stroke, and sometimes by a slow progress which prolongs to weeks and months that dreadful operation by which we are losing a part of ourselves. Youths are taken away in the full bloom and vigour of their nature, in the gay delusive dream of their mortal hopes. And we who survive, find so many thorns springing up in our most pleasing paths, that we are sometimes tempted, with him who knew most of the magnificence and luxury of life, and so most of its vanity, to *Bless the dead which are already dead, rather than the living which are yet alive*†. Such is the course of mortal man. Thus are we, like the rebellious Israelites, doomed to wander in the wilderness, with but one certainty before us in it, the sad assurance of dropping our carcases there! Surely had we no distinct and peculiar sorrows of our own we might feel those of this unhappy family to

* Rom. v. 14. † Eccl. iv. 2.

which we are allied; and there would be an evident propriety, as well as humanity, in the tears we shed for it. Yet while we are lamenting its ruined state, let us own the righteous sentence of that God, who is thus *Consuming our days in vanity, and our years in trouble**, so that we spend them *As a tale that is told*, or rather, as the word might be much better translated, *like a sigh* or *a groan*†.

But there is another subject of yet juster lamentation, to which our thoughts are directed by what we have now been hearing; I mean, that obstinacy of heart, with which multitudes *reject the counsel of God against themselves*, and despise that sovereign remedy which divine grace has provided for all their sorrows in the everlasting gospel. How many wilfully make themselves, as it were, blind and deaf, *Lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and be converted and healed*‡. Dying souls are a sad spectacle indeed; especially, when they are dying under the means and offers of life, and aggravate their ruin by the only method of cure. Where is the faith of christians, if we do not regard them as on the borders of eternal ruin? and where is the tenderness of human nature, if we can see them with indifference in so dangerous and miserable a state? David *Beheld the transgressors, and was grieved*§; and *Rivers of waters ran down his eyes, because men kept not God's law*‖. Will it be less fatal, to reject his gospel? Or should we be less impressed, when the tears of the Redeemer over perishing sinners are added to all the other moving considerations, which attend their case? *Oh that our head were waters, and our eyes were fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night*¶, for our neighbours, our friends, it may be some of our dearest relatives too! who seem so near to that state, where there will be perpetually *Weeping and wailing, and* even *gnashing of teeth***; where the torment of all the raging, shall be added to the distress of the mourning passions.

3. With what cheerfulness may we address this compassionate Saviour, when we are weeping on such accounts as called forth his own tears?

I might take occasion from hence to argue the encouragements we have, at all times, and on all occasions, to apply ourselves to him, as, according to the apostle's representation, *A high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*††; or, according to Isaiah's description, a gracious *Shep-*

* Psal. lxxviii. 33. † Psal. xc. 9. כמו הגה. ‡ Isa. vi. 10. § Psal. cxix. 158.
‖ Psal. cxix. 136. ¶ Jer. ix. 1. ** Mat. viii. 12. †† Heb. iv. 15.

*herd, who gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young*.*

But that we may not too much digress on so copious, though so delightful a theme, let us now apply the thought to the view of those sorrows in particular, which gave occasion to the mention of it; the removal of dear and pious friends, and the consideration of the calamity and degeneracy of mankind.

When our heart is overwhelmed within us, on occasion of the removal of those who were dearest to us in the bands of nature and of love, what a shelter is here! to come to this immortal friend, and open to him all the anguish of our souls! "Blessed Redeemer! Behold me in a case, which was once thine own! Thou knowest what it is to be in this sad circumstance, to be weeping over the grave of a friend. Let what thine own gentle benevolent heart then felt, engage thee to pity what I now feel, and to pour balm into this deep and painful wound! Oh let my heart be more open to thee, now this dear guest has quitted its apartment in it! Raise my soul from that dust to which it is fondly cleaving, to thy glorious and amiable self! Make up my loss in a more abundant communication of thy divine friendship, and I shall own it a rich equivalent for whatever mortality can invade!"

Again, under that distress on account of the calamities or degeneracy of human nature, which the best of men do most tenderly feel, let us apply ourselves to Christ, as the great physician, who can cure the one and the other; as one who condescended to *Come into the world, that the world through him might be saved*†. And when we see, as we shall often see, the feebleness of our own attempts; and are grieved to observe, how little we can do to supply the necessitous, to comfort the sorrowful, or to reform the vicious; let us humbly commend them to him, whose arm is almighty, whose treasures of grace and love are inexhaustible. In a word, let us with all the importunity of faith and prayer urge him to redress what he once bewailed, and to hasten that happy day, when *Every thing that offends shall be taken out of his kingdom* ‡, and a face of universal holiness and joy shall be spread through all its spacious provinces, and triumph for ever there.

4. From the tears of Christ at the grave of Lazarus we may infer, that the *death of his saints is* still *precious in his sight.*

There is not surely in human life a more cutting circumstance, than the sight of a dying friend. When all the impor-

* Isa. xl. 11. † John iii. 17. ‡ Mat. xiii. 41.

tunity of prayer, the prescriptions of art, and the offices of love have been tried in vain; when physicians own the case to be desperate, and the symptoms of it are so evident, that we cannot so much as flatter ourselves with one remaining, though delusive hope, in favour of a life which perhaps we would gladly ransom with our own: Yet even then, with what officious though unavailing eagerness do we return to the bed of languishing? and while our eyes are weeping, and our hearts bleeding, how willingly do we pass through days of confinement and nights of wakefulness, if we may but contribute to make the passage to the grave a little smoother, when the journey cannot be prevented? But alas, how poor do our efforts appear, and how weak and impotent all our pity and our friendship!

Let us then, from the subject we are now upon, draw a consolation with regard to our pious friends, which may surely as a reviving cordial raise our spirits when they droop, and mingle praises with our tears. Jesus attends them, though in an invisible form; and the eye that *wept* over Lazarus, is with incessant care fixed upon them. Can we imagine, that he is grown less gracious on his removal to the heavenly world! It is true, that he has laid aside those expressions of compassion, which are peculiar to animal nature in this inferior state, and drops of grief, and sentiments of sorrow, can have no farther place. Yet still on the throne of his glory he retains a kind of royal compassion; and in this respect, as well as another, *Having loved his own that are in the world, he loves them* even *to the end* *. He doth indeed, for wise and gracious reasons, permit and appoint their death; but as he cannot be absent from any place, or unacquainted with any circumstance of mankind, we may assure ourselves, that he is not an unconcerned spectator, when his servants are struggling away their breath, and fainting off from the stage of mortality. The compassions of a fellow-mortal are vain and fruitless; but those of a God are infinitely important. He can moderate their dying agonies, or communicate inward strength in proportion to them. He has a gentle voice, which can assure them, that their *sins are forgiven* them; and attendant angels are at his command, to convoy them to the regions of glory. Nay, we may assure ourselves, that as their great and good Shepherd, he will himself, *Be with them, when they pass through the* dark *Valley of the shadow of death*; and *his rod and*

* John xiii. 1.

*his staff*, will yet *comfort them* *. We may hope, that by his care, rays of glory shall cheer them through the gloom: and the gates of *The invisible world*, of which he *holds the keys* †, shall be opened upon them, in a manner which shall least shock and surprise. He will surely *manifest himself to them* by such gracious tokens, and embrace their separate spirits, with such unknown endearments, as shall leave no room for one moment's terror, or even a moment's suspicion. He will delight to teach them the songs of heaven, as soon as the breath passes from their mortal lips; and attemper the rays of opening glory in such a manner, as he knows most suitable to the state of spirits new-born from flesh.

These meditations seem naturally connected with the subject; and I am sure, they are full of divine consolation, to support us under the death of our pious friends, and in the views of our own, which is so soon to succeed it: especially, when connected with the last reflection I shall suggest, viz.

5. With what holy triumph will Christ *rejoice over all his people*, when he hath finally *recovered them from the power of the grave*, and *destroyed that last enemy?*

What our Lord did in this instance for Lazarus, was but an imperfect specimen of what he intends shortly to do for *all that sleep in him. All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth* ‡? and the *Dead in Christ shall rise first* §. Delightful prospect, for the Redeemer, and all the redeemed! While Christ was thus weeping over Lazarus, he *Knew what he would do* ‖; and we may assure ourselves, that his gracious heart felt a secret unutterable pleasure in the thought of it. It must be delightful to him, while sympathizing with these mourners, to reflect how soon he should *Give them beauty for ashes*, the *oil of joy for mourning*, *and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness* ¶; how soon he should turn their sorrow into raptures of pleasing surprise, by the revival of this lamented friend. And when he came to the tomb, and spake those divinely efficacious words, *Lazarus come forth*; who can describe, or imagine, the moving circumstances that attended it! With what transport did Lazarus, and Martha, and Mary, embrace and congratulate each other? With what a mixture of amazement and gratitude did they all prostrate themselves at the feet of their Almighty Saviour? and with what fervours of devotion and love did the newly ransomed captive of the grave

* Psal. xxiii. 4. † Rev. i. 18. ‡ John v. 28, 29. § 1 Thess. iv. 16.
‖ John vi. 6. ¶ Isa. lxi. 3.

consecrate to him the life which he had renewed? A stranger must have beheld such a sight with pleasure: How much sublimer delight must it then give to the great Author of such mutual happiness!

But, Oh my brethren, what was this resurrection of Lazarus to a mortal and a sinful state on earth, when compared with that resurrection to immortal holiness and glory which Christ is designing for all his people! Surely the very prospect of it must delight his compassionate heart, and add new joys to his throne *at the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Death is making havoc among his subjects here; *those whom he loveth, are sick* and dying; their *Countenances gather blackness**, and their *Bones are scattered at the grave's mouth* †: But he foresees the day, when he shall *lead captivity captive;* and he seems to glory in the view of it, and to comfort himself, as it were, in the thought of that ample vengeance which he will shortly take on their cruel destroyer. Is not that the language of those sublime words? *I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes* ‡. "Like an inexorable conqueror, I will abolish the very memorial of thee."

And when the glorious work is accomplished, with what complacency and delight will he survey it! How joyfully will he welcome that important day, which is to wipe away the reproach of his servants, and to clothe them with beauty, honour, and immortality! When he sees them springing out of their graves, as a mighty nation born at once, and shining in his own complete likeness, with what pleasure will he view that happy change, hear their mutual congratulations, and accept their united praises! Attendant angels will undoubtedly rejoice; *The morning stars will sing* sweeter, than at laying the foundations of the earth, *and the Sons of God will shout* louder *for joy* §. With what pleasure then must the blessed Jesus view it, as the work of his own love, and the travail of his very soul!

It is a known circumstance in the story of Augustus Cæsar, that when he was quitting empire and life, he expressed his great satisfaction in the improvements he had made in the buildings of Rome, so that whereas he found it brick, he left it marble ‖. But surely Christ may much more justly glory in it,

* Joel ii. 6. † Psal. cxli. 7. ‡ Hos. xiii. 14. § Job xxxviii. 7.

‖ Jure fit gloriatus marmoream se relinquere, quam lateritiam accepisset. Sueton. Vit. Aug. cap. 28.

when he descends in all the pomp of the resurrection-day, that he has made a nobler change, even in this corporeal part of our nature; and that whereas he found it mortal corruptible clay, he has raised it to a strength and splendor superior to that of marble or adamant. This is the joy and triumph of the blessed Jesus: This is the glorious hope, that animates the christian under the mournful prospect of the ravages of death.

Glorious hope! reviving thought! at once adequate to the sorrows of this day; to the solemn occasion of which I must now turn, and persuade myself, I shall not trespass on your patience, though I should a little transgress the limits of your time, while I speak of that venerable and excellent person, of that dear, amiable, generous friend, whose much lamented removal has directed our meditations to this fruitful subject, on which it has been so hard to confine them.

The Reverend and eminently worthy Dr. Samuel Clark had the honour to be descended from ancestors remarkable for their learning and piety. Mr. Samuel Clark of Bennet Fink, so well known by his historical writings, was his great grandfather by the father's side *; and Mr. Samuel Clark of Aylesbury, the author of those judicious annotations on the bible, which are still so generally esteemed, was his mother's father. As he bore the name of each, he imitated them both, as well in their ministerial, as christian character. His immediate parents were very valuable persons, whom God spared to an advanced age to rejoice in such a son; whom, in regard to the early marks both of genius and seriousness which they discerned in him, they early consecrated, together with his younger brother, the late Reverend Mr. Daniel Clark, to the service of the sanctuary. He pursued his academical studies under the direction of the learned Dr. Ker, with whom, as I have been assured by those who were then his companions, he acquired an early reputation; particularly, for that accurate acquaintance with the greek language, and that intimate knowledge of the scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, in the original, which is so important, I had almost said, so indispensable a part of ministerial furniture.

When he left the academy, he did not chuse to enter on

* I have often heard Dr. Clark express the great satisfaction he had, in reading a piece of this author, which is called Select Lives, in a small folio. It indeed contains many very memorable things, no where else to be found; and Dr. Clark said, his early acquaintance with it had so happy a tendency to form his mind to the knowledge and love of inward religion, and its secret exercises; that he could not but earnestly recommend it to others, especially to young theological students.

preaching directly, though I believe few of his years were better qualified for it: But he resided some time in two families of rank, under the capacity of a chaplain and tutor; where, while he was directing the studies of young gentlemen committed to his care, he was greatly improving his own. He had in one of these families considerable offers of preferment in the established church; which, in concurrence with other much weightier considerations, put him on studying the foundations of nonconformity with great attention. The result is well known to you, by the happy effects of it, which you enjoyed for so many years: And though no man was less inslaved to a party-spirit, or more ready to do justice and honour to learning, moderation, and piety, wherever he found any of them; yet I am authorised to say, he never repented the choice he made, under all its temporal disadvantages: Nor is it any wonder to me, that the observation of growing years, and the freest converse with men and books, and above all, the nearest views of eternity increased his satisfaction in it.

During this period of retirement, of which I have just been speaking, he gave that accurate examination to all the most remarkable theological controversies, on which he fixed his judgment in relation to them. And as he heard all the different parties of christians pleading for themselves, and endeavoured to try them all by scripture, as the only infallible standard, he happily steered between opposite extremes: And his great natural sagacity enabling him to see much farther into many questions, than the generality of mankind do, he plainly discerned, that many matters which have been most warmly debated, have related to what is circumstantial rather than essential in the doctrines of christianity, and when sifted to the bottom, relate rather to different phrases, than different ideas. This gave him that moderation, for which he was so eminently remarkable and amiable; and engaged him, while he was vigorously supporting and strongly enforcing the great peculiarities of the gospel, to *hold the truth in love*, and not only to bear with those that expressed themselves differently with respect to some of them, but to pay a real deference to those valuable qualities which he discerned in them, and to which no man seemed to render more impartial justice. It was a maxim, which he early imbibed, and constantly retained, "that all the heresies which had corrupted and afflicted the church, owed their original to men's departing from the simplicity of scripture, and must derive their cure from a return to it."

When he appeared under the character of a preacher, he

happily joined the rational and pathetic with the scriptural and evangelical strain. In consequence of this, the most judicious hearers were entertained, whilst the least knowing were instructed, and they who had made the greatest progress in the divine life were led on to farther improvements. It was an honour to the taste and judgment of those who then constituted this society, that they unanimously made choice of him for their pastor: And who can express how great a blessing it has been to the church and auditory, to have enjoyed the benefit of his labours more than thirty-eight years? During which, as every public assembly in which he presided, has been witness to the fervency of his prayers, and the excellent matter and tendency of his discourses; so he has had a testimony in the conscience of every one that knew him, how powerful his instructions and exhortations were enforced by the most blameless and honourable conversation.

Most remarkably may it be said of him, that in strenuous imitation of his Divine Master, *he went about doing good*; and all the branches of his work were his delight. As his mind was furnished with a rich variety of knowledge, in consequence of a long and very close attention to reading, meditation, and prayer; so he was always ready to communicate it, and desirous to support, wherever he came, a spirit of rational and improving conversation; that he might fill up his time profitably abroad as well as at home, and redeem the hours which are so frequently lost even by persons of knowledge and piety. Seasons appointed for meals were not exempted from his care; and as the book of God, of course, furnished out his own family food for the mind during that of the morning *, so what he daily met with in other books, often greatly improved by his own judicious reflections, was happily introduced on other occasions.

His generous heart was always working with some benevolent and useful design; and he endeavoured to inspire all about him with such sentiments, and to encourage to the utmost every worthy pursuit, whether in his brethren in the ministry, or in private christians. His steadiness of temper carried him through the various accidents of life, with uncommon composure. Far from that desultory temper, which is

* It was in Dr. Clark's family a general custom, if no other necessary subject of conversation occurred, for every member of it present at breakfast to repeat a text of scripture; and I have known it from thence transplanted elsewhere.

often so fatal to the usefulness even of great men, he pursued with persevering patience whatever good design he undertook; and that prudence which was so distinguished a part of his character, enabled him to judge of the importance of ends, and the properest measures of obtaining them: So that I have seldom known any, who appeared to suffer fewer disappointments in the prosecution of their schemes, than he.

His great modesty did indeed prevent him from some public services, of which he was on many accounts very capable: I mean, instructing the world more frequently from the press. But the few specimens of this kind which he has given, are sufficient to make us regret there are no more, and to excite our wishes that some way may be found of rescuing from oblivion some of his many valuable remains.

It was one instance of Dr. Clark's remarkable wisdom, that he was a most attentive observer of providence: And the conduct of providence towards him was, in many respects, peculiarly worthy of observation: He delighted himself in the Almighty, and God gave him the desire of his heart.

He was undoubtedly one of the happiest, as well as one of the best of men, in domestic life; and indeed, for a long course of years, prosperity seemed to attend on all his steps. As he was greatly blessed in a most suitable, affectionate, and amiable consort, and in a train of lovely children, he treated them always with the most endearing tenderness, and was perpetually labouring to improve all his influence over them, for their advancement in religion, and in whatever else might make them capable of increasing happiness.

Prudence taught him to form friendship with due deliberation, and none could cultivate it more faithfully; nor could any one be happier in expressing the kind sentiments with which his heart overflowed, wherever he professed it, or more ready to think himself obliged, or to return with interest every good office he received. And the good hand of his God was remarkably upon him in this respect, in sparing to him for many years some intimate friends, for whom he had through life the highest esteem; and in raising up others towards the close of his life, who shewed in the most obliging manner the high respect they paid to his merit as soon as they began to know it, and the pleasure they took in contributing to his happiness.

As God had placed him in more plentiful circumstances than many of his brethren, it appeared that he well knew how to use and to become them. His mind was too great to be in any degree elated with them, too wise and too good to fail of improving them for the best purposes. His liberal soul devis-

ed liberal things, which yet he was studious to conceal. He took a peculiar pleasure, in hospitably sharing with his brethren and friends the bounties of divine Providence ; and gave and received a new supply of spirits, while he was conversing with them in such circumstances.

Thus did this good and happy man pass through a long series of years, increasing in knowledge and in piety, in zeal and usefulness ; loving all, and by all beloved ; honouring all, who deserved any peculiar regard, and by all such honoured, in proportion to their knowledge of him ; bringing joy into every house which he entered, and most of all into his own when he returned to it. And when towards the close of so bright a day, heavy afflictions visited him, he took occasions from them to exhibit new virtues and graces, and to demonstrate that it was not from speculation alone, he had known how so well in prosperity to inculcate the duties of adversity. He bore frequent visits of acute pain, with uncommon patience and cheerfulness : And though the unutterable pleasure he took in exerting himself continually in public service, rendered his paralytic disorders peculiarly grievous ; yet even these he supported with great resignation to the will of God, and cheerful hope in his long experienced goodness. And in this visitation, mercy surrounded him in a manner well worthy of our recollection. Though his speech was so much affected by it, as to render him, for more than a year and an half, incapable of the labours of the pulpit, yet his understanding continued in its full vigour ; nor did I ever hear him discourse with more sagacity and penetration, or pray with more readiness or propriety of expression, than since this lamented complaint seized him : And he was still capable of study, which to his latest days he pursued with as much eagerness, as if he had just been laying in his furniture for the ministry.

There seemed also a providential beauty in the vicissitudes of Dr. Clark's illness and recovery. Whereas he was so extremely afflicted for a considerable time at Bath with a complication of distempers, that his skilful physician scarce expected to have found him alive at his return, for several days ; his spirits still kept up to the amazement of all that were around him, and he discovered a serenity which nothing could discompose, a cheerfulness which nothing could overbear. Thus he triumphed over death, when it seemed to make its nearest and most deliberate approaches : And after this you know, in how surprising a manner he was given back to the prayers which were offered for him, and restored to his own house, and the house of his friends again ; yea, what was to him most delight-

ful of all, restored to the house of his God. I cannot express the pleasure with which I reflect upon it, that the last sabbath, and almost the last day of his life, was spent with you in this place; and that he was administring the sacrament of the Lord's-supper to you, but a few hours before he received his final discharge from the service of this lower world*. And truly, I think the circumstances of that discharge peculiarly favourable. To be so suddenly struck, as to be able only by a speaking smile to testify to the dear relatives then near him, the secret tranquility and joy of his heart, when all the powers of utterance and of nature were failing him at once; and then to take flight for heaven, without so much as a groan, is a death greatly to be congratulated, when viewed in connexion with such a life.

Oh my brethren, what shall I say? With difficulty indeed do I restrain a thousand thoughts which are rising in my mind, while I speak of my friend, of my father, for such I may properly call him, if all the offices of paternal tenderness and care can merit that title. We cannot but mourn, yet let us rejoice too. Let us rejoice that we have known him, and known him to be such a man; that he has marked his way with such distinguished usefulness, and scatterd so many blessings, of which so many are left behind him. As when Dorcas was gone, surviving friends *shewed the garments which she had made for the poor*, as memorials of her goodness so may I this day shew many remaining, many present effects of Dr. Clark's piety and zeal; and though so many of them may seem to be hidden in the grave, yet neither are they lost. To him, I may truly say, that under God I owe even myself, and all my opportunities of public usefulness in the church; to him, who was not only the instructor of my childhood and youth in the principles of religion, but my guardian when an helpless orphan, as well as the generous, tender, faithful friend, of all my advancing years. By him, were many of you instructed with me in the course of catechistical lectures, and other exercises of the like kind, which he so happily invented and diversified for the benefit of the rising generation.† To him, as the instrument in the hand of divine grace, do many of you owe it, that early religious impressions were made upon your minds; that you were introduced betimes to the table of

* On Lord's-day, December 2, whereas he died on the Tuesday following.

† It was customary with Dr. Clark for many years, to meet young persons at the vestry on the Thursday evenings for religious conversations, in which he went over successively some useful subjects, of which he gave them some schemes in writing, that they might give him an account of them. Thus he went over the

the Lord; and that you were formed, by all the advantages of instruction and example, to those characters which many of you so worthily and usefully sustain. In some families he has been in all these respects successively a blessing to parents and children; and he has with unutterable pleasure seen in many of you, that his *Labours have not been in vain in the Lord.* And I cannot look upon the children of the charity school now present, without recollecting, that it is now more than thirty years since it was founded by his pious care, exciting the generality of his flock, to make, if I mistake not, the first efforts of this kind, that was ever made among the dissenters in the country; which has since been followed in many other places with happy success, and which I hope will still be, as I am sure the institution here has already been a means of great good, with respect both to the temporal and eternal interest of many, who must otherwise have been exposed to great ignorance and wretchedness.

Such are the monuments, which our honoured friend has left behind him: And may they long remain! May the effects of his pious and excellent labours be more and more conspicuous! Grievous indeed would it be, if any who heard such exhortations, and saw them illustrated by such an example, should remain unimpressed with a sense of divine things. If there be any such present, let me entreat them to hear him once more while dead, yet speaking. Let me entreat them to give an attentive perusal to those excellent sermons on the folly of irresolution in religion, which at our united request he published: They seem sufficient to convince every conscience; and oh that divine grace might add efficacy to the conviction! As for those of us, who by that grace have felt and submitted to the power of such considerations, and are now serving God in the sincerity of our hearts, what can be more seasonable, under our present distress, than to have recourse to that collection of scripture-promises, which he so judiciously ranged in connexion with the characters to which they are made. Let us drink of these living streams, from that fountain which never can be drawn dry, and our souls shall be refreshed; and we shall be taught to say, with a joy which a loss like this will not be able to take away, *The Lord liveth, and blessed be our rock; and let the God of our salvation be exalted.* Amen.

history of scripture, the evidences of natural and revealed religion, the reasons of the reformation from popery, and the ethics of Solomon, collected from a very judicious analysis which he made of his proverbs and book of Ecclesiastes. He has left behind him fairly transcribed in short-hand, between two and three hundred discourses on this last subject, which I could wish in every hand, so far as I can judge of the specimen I have seen of them.

# AN ORATION

AT THE GRAVE OF

# THE REV. MR. JOHN NEWMAN.

*Spoke on July* 31, 1741.

*The substance of what was delivered at the interment of the Rev. Mr. Newman, July* 31, 1741 ; *with the addition of some particulars, which there was not time then to introduce.*

As we advance from one stage to another in the journey of life, we grow still more familiarly acquainted with its various afflictions. And this is the constitution of a wise and gracious God, who is thus training us up for that world, where we shall be above the need of sorrow, and so for ever above the reach of it. In the mean time, our heavenly father doth not leave us comfortless ; and blessed be his name, his *Consolations are not small.* On the contrary, they are most important, as well as various, and so accommodated, both to the weight, and to the variety of our distresses.

We are now an assembly of mourners, gathered together around the grave of a very worthy and excellent person. Some of us have lost one of the most affectionate of all parents ; others, a wise, watchful, and diligent pastor ; and all that knew him to any degree of intimacy, so faithful, and so tender a friend, that we must be strangely happy, if we find a great many like him, in this imperfect and impoverished world. But there are comforts in the word of God, suited exactly to such a case as this, and expressly designed to teach us, that we should not *sorrow as those who have no hope*, for the removal of such as, like him, *sleep in Jesus.* God would have us cheered in such a touching circumstance ; and that the comfort may be administered in the most proper and effectual manner, he puts words into our mouth upon such an occasion, that we may not be at a loss, even when our own are swallowed up : many words, which have been through succeeding ages, ever since they were

written, the joy of dying and surviving christians, in whatever circumstances they might die or survive. And these consolations are, indeed, like some kinds of rich perfume, which retain their fragrancy from one age to another: but with this glorious difference, that whereas those cordial productions of nature gradually lose their sweetness, though by slow degrees, these consolations rather grow more and more powerful, as the great objects of that hope which they administer come nearer and nearer to us.

Attend to them therefore with faith, and you must surely, if you are indeed christians, attend with pleasure. Let the most pained heart, though contracted with the most distinguished share of sorrow on this mournful occasion, open itself to these comforts; and let the dejected, weeping, overflowing eye, be raised to meet so glorious a prospect. For I say and testify to you by the word of the Lord, as spoken to us by that illustrious apostle St. Paul, that the pious dead are not perished; but that *if we believe that Jesus died and rose again*, we have all imaginable reason to depend upon it, that such as *sleep in Jesus God will bring with him: For the Lord Jesus Christ himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we also*, i. e. those of us christians, who in our different generations are all but one body, *who remain alive, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort ye one another with these words.*

Lift up your heads, oh! ye mourning christians, to survey more distinctly this delightful prospect. Lift them up with joy; for your redemption, and that of your now lamented friend's, most assuredly draweth nigh.

The grave is continually multiplying its triumphs; and with how many of its affecting trophies are we here surrounded! we die by the righteous sentence of God against sin, against the first sin of the common founder of our race: *But as by man came death, by man comes also the resurrection of the dead; and as we are bearing the image of the earthly Adam*, and shall ere long like, him, return to the dust, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

It does not surely *seem an incredible thing* to any of us, *that God should raise the dead.* And if it seem not incredible, it cannot possibly be thought inconsiderable: especially when we reflect on the glorious manner, in which the resurrection

of the just is to be accomplished. Our Lord Jesus Christ will see to it, that it be done ; yea, he will himself be present at it : it shall be done by his express care, command, and power. *The Lord himself will descend from heaven* on this account, while all his celestial attendants shall shout forth their joys on the illustrious occasion. And the first thing which he does upon that descent, even before he takes any visible and distinct notice of the saints then alive, will be to call out of their graves those that sleep in him : as if he were impatient of that bondage in which their bodies had been detained, and a declared enmity against that destroyer. *O death*, says he, with a majestic indignation, *I will be thy plagues ! Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.* I will not leave thee one of my servants to triumph over : however obscure in life ; how long soever forgotten in the dust ; I will redeem all my Israel, and *not a hoof shall be left behind.*

And, oh, let us consider in what forms they shall appear : *He will change these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to that mighty power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself : Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory :* not the least trace of it remaining in all the redeemed world : nothing by which it could be known, that any one of all the thousands and ten thousands of God's Israel had ever been for one moment under its power. Glorious display of the royalty and magnificence of God's love to his people ! That though it be not in itself absolutely necessary to their happiness ; yet the meaner part of their nature shall be rescued from the abasements of the grave, and not only recovered, but beautified, invigorated, and adorned !

Nor is this to be merely the triumph of one public and solemn day. It is added, as the crown of all, *so shall we ever be with the Lord !* And let it be remembered, that it is said, not of the apostles alone, or of those, who like our reverend father, whose remains we now attend, have borne sacred offices in the church, and honoured God in them by distinguished services ; but it is said of every true believer, and was intended to include us, on whom the ends of the world are come, who are, so far as our character answers our christian profession, as dear to Christ, as if we had lived seventeen hundred years ago, and ministered to him, or to his apostles. And how much is implied in this ? We shall be with Christ ! Glorious hope, worth dying for ? Who, that indeed loves him, does not say in his heart, even now, with all these solemn ensigns of death

before his eyes, I *desire to depart and to be with Christ: And let the worms destroy this body*, and let the tomb press it down: May but my enlarged spirit soar up to him, though corporeal delights, and creature converse were to be known no more! But you will remember, we are to be with the Lord in our complete persons, and in one complete society too: and what is the crown of all, and affords, in a few words, if I may so speak, a kind of infinite delight, *we shall be for ever with him.* Nothing shall ever separate us from him; nothing imbitter, nothing interrupt, so much as for a moment, the pleasure of our endeared converse with him.

And now I will appeal to you, my dear friends, who are most painfully wounded by this sad stroke; and to whom all the tender names of father, and pastor, and friend, are grown sounds of sorrowful memorial, in proportion to the degree in which they were once delightful; yet I will appeal even to you, if these are not good and *comfortable words*, fit for an apostle to write, and for God himself to dictate to his mourning children. It appears from what I have been saying, that it is well with our dear departed friends who sleep in Jesus: they are *sealed up among God's treasures: They enter into peace, they rest in their beds;* and they shall rise from them in the morning of the resurrection, not like Lazarus, with his grave clothes about him; but dressed in the robes of glory and immortality. And if this were all that could be said with relation to them, were it not to sound reason and a lively faith much, were it not abundantly enough to vindicate the kindness of God's dispensations towards them, though they might seem for a short moment, while they lie in the dust, as under his rebukes? were it not enough to awaken our congratulations rather than our condolences? Yet to increase the pleasure, with which we look after these beloved objects, now removed from our sight, we are farther told, and it is by no means to be forgotten, that even now, while *absent from the body*, they are in an important sense and degree *present with the Lord;* and so present, that their most intimate converse with him on earth was, in comparison with this, but absence from him. It is then well with them indeed; and it shall be well with us too, if we are christians; so soon, so certainly, so entirely well, that I wonder at the weakness of our minds, that they should be so much depressed with this short separation: for these very scriptures assure us, we shall meet with them again; for they and we being with the Lord, we must be with each other. What a delightful thought is this! when we run over the long

catalogue of excellent friends, which we rashly say we have lost, to think, each of us, I also shall be *gathered to my people*, to those whom my heart still owns under that character, with an affection which death could not cancel, nor these years of absence erase. Nature takes a fond kind of pleasure in the secret thought, that with regard to some of them, our coffins shall in a little time stand by theirs, and our dust must be mingled in the same grave. Poor trifling comfort! as if dust could tell where it was, and with what it was mingled. But the gospel assures us, that if we be *followers of them, who through faith and patience do now inherit the promises*, our spirits shall ere long join with theirs, in the services and pleasures of the heavenly world. And how far will this be beyond all that pleasure with which on earth we have taken sweet counsel together, and gone to the house of God in company! And it also assures us, that, at last, we, who have taken our parts in the sad procession of mourners, that conveyed them to this house of darkness and silence, if we indeed believe in him who is the resurrection and the life, shall also have our place in that bright procession, in which Christ shall lead them on to the gates of glory, in that day, when he will say, in a yet more important sense than he did in the day of his agony, and with his expiring breath, "*It is finished:* the purposes of my dying love are completely accomplished, and my people are what I always intended they should at last be, and always rejoiced in the views of making them."

Only let us all suffer the word of exhortation, and make it our care, that seeing we look for such things, we *receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and walk in him.* It is a terrible, but most certain truth, that there are many who wear the name of Christ now, whom he will at last disown, and *will say to them, Depart from me, I know you not whence you are.* It is most certain, we must be united to Christ by faith now, and conformed to him in true holiness, or we shall have no *part or lot in this matter.* Let us therefore *gird up the loins of our mind*, let us renew our resolution, and our watchfulness, and so *hope to the end, for the grace that shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ*, when he shall administer to all his faithful servants an abundant entrance into his heavenly kingdom. Amen.

# FUNERAL SERMONS.

THE

## CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH OVER DEATH:

A SERMON OCCASIONED BY THE MUCH-LAMENTED DEATH OF THE

REV. PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D. D.

AND MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT NORTHAMPTON.

*Who died October 26, 1751, in the Fiftieth Year of his Age.*

BY JOB ORTON.

TO

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT NORTHAMPTON,

LATELY

*Under the Pastoral Care of the Rev. Dr. Doddridge;*

Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

THOUGH providence has removed me to a distance from you, I share largely in those sorrows, with which your minds are filled on account of the death of your learned, pious, and excellent pastor; an event which all our churches greatly and justly lament. When he assigned to me the work of preaching the sermon on that occasion, he was sensible my respect for you, as well as for him, would not suffer me to decline it. In compliance with his desire the following discourse was drawn up, in the best manner I could, amidst the languors of an infirm constitution, and the interruption of many necessary avocations. And it had been long ago preached among you, had not a wise providence permitted an unhappy accident to befal me, which confines me at home. It is the most grievous circumstance in this affliction, that I am prevented from visiting you, performing the service assigned me by my ever-honoured friend and father, and personally suggesting to you such consolations and advices as may, in present circumstances, be peculiarly useful. To supply this lack of service, I am constrained to send you the discourse from the press: And this, I hope, will be a sufficient apology with those, who may think it unworthy of public regard. It is some satisfaction to me to reflect, that discourses, on such solemn occasions, have been attended with great usefulness, especially to the acquaintance and friends of the deceased, which has often flowed, not so much from the thoughts and advices contained in them consi-

dered alone, as viewed in connection with the awful events which occasioned them. I hope therefore, that a recollection of the Doctor's eminent worth, and the loss his family, his flock, and the public sustain by his death, will cast a veil over the imperfections of this discourse, and fill every reader's heart with so much seriousness and tenderness, as may make way, for the plain remarks and admonitions contained therein, to impress it, and through the influences of the Spirit of Jesus, produce some valuable effect.

I cannot conclude this address without expressing my warmest gratitude to you, for all the respect and affection with which you honoured me, during the agreeable years I spent amongst you. And it is my earnest wish and prayer, that you may yet flourish, and be edified, *walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost:* Particularly that you may act upon those noble and truly christian maxims of candor and unanimity, which your late pastor inculcated upon you, and the public, in all your future conduct, and especially in the choice of his successor; that the head of the church would give you a pastor after his own heart, under whom you may daily grow in christian knowledge and holiness, and be training up for the perfection and happiness of the heavenly state. These are the daily prayers of,

*My dear Friends,*

*Your very affectionate Friend,*

*and Servant, for Jesus sake,*

*JOB ORTON.*

# SERMON VIII.

1 Cor. xv. 54. latter part. ——— *Death is swallowed up in Victory.*

THE dying bed of an eminent christian is a most melancholy, and, at the same time, a most delightful scene: Grief for the dominion of sin and death, and the loss we are sustaining by his removal, joy in the supports of religion he feels, and the promises of the gospel he rests upon, take place in our minds by turns, and sometimes mingle together. But in a soul formed to a relish for virtuous friendship, and deeply impressed with the great truths of christianity, the joy will preponderate; and the pious heart will overflow with sacred delight to see the terrors of death removed, to observe how wonderfully God sustains his servants in their last conflict, and what an attestation they give to the fulness and sweetness of christian consolations. In this instance in particular, God graciously makes his providence a commentary upon his word, and illustrates the promises of his gospel by the joy and peace he diffuses into the hearts of his dying saints. Our text has often been the means of producing this joy, and is indeed one of the most comfortable declarations, that mortal creatures can hear; and the awful event, which directs my thoughts to it, confirms the excellency and suitableness of it. It should, certainly, be regarded by all with an attention becoming dying creatures. But there are two circumstances, my friends, to recommend it to your peculiar regard, viz. that it was exemplified in the closing scenes of the life of your late worthy pastor, so justly dear to you and to me, and that, out of a particular concern for your support and encouragement, living and dying, it was his express, his last, and almost dying request, that I would discourse to you from it, on this very melancholy occasion.

The excellent and reviving chapter of which the text is a part, was intended to confute the opinion of those who said, there was *No resurrection of the dead**. Their error seems to have been in asserting, that what Christ and his apostles had said

* Whitby in loc.

of a resurrection, did not refer to a resurrection of the dead, but a resurrection or renovation to a life of holiness from a state of sin, which is justly and beautifully described as a state of death. This, probably, was the error of Hymeneus and Philetus, who said, that *The resurrection is past already* *. The apostle Paul therefore sets himself to prove at large, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead. He proves it possible, from the resurrection of Christ; a well known and undisputed fact. He proves it certain, from the connection between this fact, and the authority of the apostles to publish his religion; of which this doctrine was so distinguishing and glorious a part; and also from the relation, in which Christ, the last Adam stood to mankind. And as the objections against this doctrine chiefly arose from not understanding its nature, and the circumstances of the new body, he enlarges upon these topics in the latter part of the chapter; and concludes it with a divine and most eloquent rapture, describing the glorious resurrection of the saints, of whom alone he there speaks, and triumphing in the prospect of this blissful event; *So*, says he, *when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in Victory."* The text is a quotation from the prophecies of Isaiah, where it is said, *He will swallow up death in victory* †; and probably refers to the deliverance of the Israelites from that utter destruction, which the king of Assyria threatened, and attempted to bring upon them: A deliverance that was indeed, life from the dead. It is with great propriety and beauty, that these sublime and comfortable words are by St. Paul accommodated to the resurrection of the dead. The text suggests to us these two remarks, which I will endeavour to illustrate, and then direct you to the proper improvement of them.

I. Death may naturally be considered as an enemy.
II. True christians shall obtain a complete victory over it.

I. Death may naturally be considered as an enemy.

This is implied in the text, when the apostle speaks of a *victory;* and it is expressly asserted in verse 26. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death.* It is an enemy we are every one to conflict with, for *There is no discharge in that war* ‡. Death is, by an elegant figure, often described in the scriptures, as a person, or intelligent agent. It is emphatically styled *The king of terrors* §, and said to *Reign* over mankind *by one man's*

* 2 Tim. ii. 18. † Isa. xxv. 8. ‡ Eccl. viii. 8. § Job xviii. 14.

*offence**. Nature and experience teach us to consider death as an enemy; for

It dissolves the union between soul and body. It dislodges the soul, willing or unwilling; and separates it from its old and dear companion. Providence has wisely implanted in every human mind a love to the body to which it is united, and a tender concern for its health; insomuch that, *No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*†. Consequently a separation must be painful. Though good men while *In this tabernacle*, this mean precarious building, *groan, being burdened*, yet there is a natural aversion to put it off. *Not*, says the apostle, *for that we would be unclothed*‡. It would be more agreeable to take the body with us to another world, than go through the pain and terror of dying, and have these two bosom friends divorced. This is a circumstance we would be glad to be excused from, especially as it is the consequence and punishment of sin; but death will pull down this structure, which, mean as it is, we are fond of, having dwelt in it so long, and having been at so much care and pains to keep it in tolerable repair, and will force the inhabitant to remove.

Again, Death destroys the activity and beauty of the body, and turns it into loathsomeness and corruptions. Diseases, its forerunners, generally *Consume away the flesh that it cannot be seen, and the bones that were not seen, stick out*§. At length the comeliness of the body is turned into deformity, and what was an object of delight, becomes a spectacle of horror. The limbs that were sprightly and active, grow stiff and useless: The eyes which sparkled with life and vigour, are sunk and ghastly: The learned brain, in which so many curious traces were lodged, so many ideas ranged with the utmost care, and retained by close recollection, has lost its exquisite sensibility; and the entertaining and instructive tongue is sealed up in silence. The vitals of the body have lost their powers. The lungs cease to play, and the heart to beat. *The silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken, the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern*‖. Then we are willing to bury our dead out of our sight; to cast the *desire of our eyes* into the grave, to mingle with common dust, and lie in dishonour and darkness for ages to come.

Further, Death removes us from our most near and intimate friends, and other earthly comforts.

* Rom. v. 17. † Eph. v. 29. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 4. § Job xxxiii. 21. ‖ Eccl. xii. 6.

It dissolves the ties of nature, and the alliances of friendship; and breaks down the pleasing fabric of happiness, which love had been for many years erecting. The benevolent heart is ready to take up Hezekiah's mournful complaint, *I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world**.

Further, it breaks off men's thoughts and purposes relating to this world, for the good of their families, neighbourhood, and the public. The great thoughts of wise and pious men for the glory of God and the advancement of religion perish; and the charitable schemes, which depended on the continuance of their lives, are defeated.

Finally, The little acquaintance we have with the other world, to which death transmits us, increases the fear of a removal hence.

We know so little of our souls and their manner of existence and operation without a body, and there are so many doubts and fears about their eternal condition prevailing in us, that it is no wonder, the thought of quitting the present scene is painful, and death, as it removes us from it, is considered as an enemy.

Whose heart is not ready to fail him in the prospect? Who does not find his reason and sometimes his faith too, ready to sink, when he is going to encounter the *king of terrors*, and pass through his dark and gloomy regions to an unknown and unalterable state? And in vain we call to reason, and ask philosophy to furnish us with sufficient armour of defence, and to fortify our minds against the attacks of this stern invader. It is the peculiar glory of the gospel of Christ to assist our reason, and increase our faith in proportion to the strength of the enemy, and the different impressions which the apprehensions of it make upon our minds. And this it does by the discovery it makes of a future state, a glorious resurrection, and a final everlasting triumph over death.

Having thus briefly viewed the frightful features of the enemy, let us turn our eyes to a more bright and agreeable scene; and observe

II. True christians shall obtain a complete victory over death.

The text informs us that a victory shall be gained, and it shall be so complete, that death may be said to be even *swallowed up* in it, quite destroyed, and no traces or remainders of it be found. This is confirmed by the passage already mentioned; verse 26. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* The word (καταργεῖται) rendered *destroyed*, signifies being divested of

* Isa. xxxviii. 11.

an authority it had before, and being reduced to an incapacity of exerting any further power*. Thus after the same apostle had been speaking of *Persecution, peril, and sword, of being killed all the day-long*, as the lot of himself and his fellow-christians, he adds, *nay in all these things we are more than conquerors* †, complete, glorious, triumphant conquerors—and this is agreeable to what God himself declares concerning this formidable enemy, with so much grandeur and majesty. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from my eyes*‡.

For the further illustration of this comfortable truth, let us observe, that the victory is in some measure obtained in the present life—but it shall be perfected in the future.

1. The victory is in some measure obtained even in the present life.

Christ gained a victory by his own resurrection, and the revelation and promise of a happiness beyond the grave; for he hath *Abolished death*, abolished its tyranny, destroyed its force, and rendered it, comparatively, of none effect, *and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel* §. He has assured us of the certainty and eternity of the future state, and largely explained its nature——he has not indeed removed the natural fears of death which are wrought into our very constitution, and are the springs of many of our actions; nor is it his intention entirely to remove from the minds of good men that fear of death, which has an apparent tendency to promote seriousness and watchfulness, an heavenly disposition which keeps them always prepared for the coming of the Lord. But he has taken away the slavish apprehensions of it, and delivered them, who, *Through fear of death, were, all their life long, subject to bondage.* Death has now, in effect, changed its nature. It only hurts the body, not the soul. It only puts an end to those pursuits, employments, and entertainments, which are suited to the body, and this present world; but not to those, about which holy souls are engaged, and with which they are delighted and improved. Nay, it is become, on many accounts, a benefit; as it puts an end to their temptations and conflicts, doubts and fears; as it hides their bodies in the grave, for ever

* Compare verse 24. where the same word is rendered, *put down*. † Rom. viii. 37. ‡ Hos. xiii. 14. § 2 Tim. i. 10. compared with Rom. ii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 28. xiii. 8. Eph. ii. 15. Heb. i. 14.

shelters them from the pains and sorrows to which they are here exposed, and transports their separate spirits to everlasting purity and peace.

A present victory is obtained by the calmness with which the saints die; and that *joy unspeakable and full of glory*, with which the Spirit of Christ sometimes replenishes their hearts, when the flesh is sinking into the dust.—Are they not conquerors, when, with smiles in their pale countenances, and songs of praise upon their quivering lips, they calmly yield to the stroke of death, and, through Christ who strengthened them, triumph over all its frightful powers, saying, *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?* Let me add, this is death's last attack. It strikes once, but can never strike more; and "all the hurt it can possibly do them, is to put it absolutely out of his own power ever to hurt them any more*". Which leads me to add further,

2. The victory shall be perfected in the future world.

And this will appear, when we consider, that all the faithful servants of Christ shall be raised again; their bodies shall be transformed into the likeness of Christ's body; and they shall be fixed in a state of complete and everlasting happiness.

1. All the faithful servants of Christ shall be raised again.

They are laid in the grave, but not one of them shall be lost there. *Death feeds on them*, but at the great day they *shall have the dominion.* That there shall be a resurrection of the dead, that their bodies, which are turned to corruption, shall be redeemed, and so much of each, as shall be sufficient to denominate it their own body, collected and united by the almighty power of God, is certainly declared in the holy scriptures. We have some intimations of this in the Old Testament, upon which the Jews grounded their belief that there should be a *Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust* †. But it is plainly revealed in the New. *The hour is coming when all, that are in their graves, shall hear the voice of Christ, and come forth*‡ *This*, says he, *is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day*§. This doctrine the apostles preached; they assured the christians, that he *Who raised up Christ from the dead, should quicken their mortal bodies*‖. That *Christ was risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept*¶,"

* Mr. How. † Acts xxiv. 15. ‡ John v. 28. § John vi. 40.
‖ Rom. viii. 11. ¶ 1 Cor. xv. 20.

of that plentiful harvest which should spring out of the dust, when the Lord should descend again from heaven. The resurrection of Christ, illustrated by the resurrection of other dead bodies, proves what God can do, and testifies what he will do. And this chapter alone will keep up the belief of this great event, till the trumpet shall sound, and the resurrection prove itself. Captivity shall be led captive, and death, which has triumphed over the whole human race, shall himself be triumphed over, when the earth and the sea shall give up their dead. Though we now say to corruption, thou art my father, and to the devouring worm, thou art my mother and my sister: The authority and power of Christ shall at length dissolve the disagreeable relation, and the grave claim no more acquaintance with us. But, as a bare resurrection is common to good and bad; and since, *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;* therefore we must add,

2. Their bodies shall be transformed into the image of Christ's body.

This is their peculiar honour; and the apostle Paul asserts it in very strong terms; *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself**. The doctrine of the resurrection was ridiculed by the weaker heathens as impossible, and represented by the wiser as undesirable; turning the soul again into a prison, and laying upon it an insupportable burden: But the account the apostle gives us in this chapter, of the great alteration which shall be made in the bodies of the saints, answers their objections. He assures us, that *weakness, corruption,* and *dishonour* shall be left in the grave; and *the body be raised in incorruption, glory and power; a spiritual body,* not an animal one. And *as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* The body shall be quite refined from gross matter, be more active and sprightly, and more easily moved from place to place, than it now is, in its utmost flow of health and spirits. It shall have no gross organs to obscure the faculties of the soul, or clog its operations. It shall need no such supports as it now does, nor feel any of those appetites, which are often temptations to sin, and which, without resolute government, injure the health, and prevent the serviceableness of the body, as well as interrupt the tranquility and peace of the mind. It shall have no corrupt blood, or sour juices to oc-

* Phil. iii. 21.

casion irregular ferments, to excite the angry passions, or produce a melancholy, or a fretful disposition. There will be no *law in the members warring against the law of the mind*, and bringing it into *captivity*. It will exert itself with the utmost vigour in God's service, without being wearied with it, or worn out by it. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* The place, the company, the work of heaven, will all tend to increase their lustre and activity. If Moses's converse with God for a few days left such a brightness on his countenance, that the Israelites could not bear to behold it, it is very natural to infer, that dwelling in the presence of God, the fountain of light, beholding the glory of Christ for years and ages, will improve the splendor of pure, spiritual, incorruptible bodies. And, it is probable, a covering of effulgent glory will be thrown over them, as there was over Christ's body when he was transfigured, *And his face shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light* *; and make them *shine as the brightness of the firmament.* And the more they resemble Christ in moral excellency, the more will their spiritual bodies resemble his, and the more illustrious be this mark of distinction and dignity. But what is the precise nature of these bodies; how they will move and act; whether new organs will be added, or the present altered; in what manner the soul will act, and be influenced by them; are questions which we cannot solve, while we dwell in *Houses of clay.* It is sufficient for us to know, that every thing, which was an imperfection or a mark of the divine displeasure against sin, shall be entirely removed; that the body shall be so changed and new moulded, as to be every way suited to assist the holy and happy spirit to which it is re-united, in the noblest services and enjoyments. Thus when *Christ appears*, every saint shall awake in his likeness, and *appear with him in glory.* What a noble triumph over death will this be, when every captive shall be released, and every one clothed with the robes of glory? Especially when we consider,

3. They shall be fixed in a state of complete and everlasting happiness.

Of this also the scriptures of truth assure us: *They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, cannot die any more; for they are like the angels* †. *Mortality* or that which is mortal *shall be swallowed up of life* ‡, and no traces of it left. It is a very considerable

* Mat. xvii. 2. † Luke xx. 35, 36. Mat. xxii. 30. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 4.

part of the glory of the heavenly world, that *There shall be no more death**. Some noted commentators† would interpret the words, here rendered, *in victory, for ever*, as denoting the utter destruction of death. The idea is plainly suggested in the phrase, *swallowed up;* and this truth is confirmed by the passages already mentioned, and many more in the scriptures, that not one true christian shall be liable to the attack of death any more.

There shall be no fear of death remaining. A conquered enemy may recover his strength, assault us again, and prevail, at least so far as to alarm and terrify us; but death is *swallowed up*, and has no more power to overcome, or disturb the exalted, glorified servants of Christ for ever; not so much as one of the harbingers, or attendants of death, shall ever incommode them. There is no fear of the return of acute pains or pining sickness; which are often so grievous, as to dispose the heart to *Long for death*, as a relief, and be *glad to find the grave*‡. Their bodies are not varnished over with an outward lustre, but perfectly free from all principles of decay. They are not only secure from external violence, but full of unfading, immortal vigour. Death has no power to take away, to molest, or even alarm any one of their friends and associates in that better country; but because Christ *lives, they shall also live*, and their duration be equal to his.——Finally, There shall be no painful remembrance of death. A recollection of violent pains and cutting sorrows often gives uneasiness: When, as Jeremiah expresseth it, concerning his own misery, the soul hath the *Wormwood and gall still in remembrance*§, it embitters present enjoyments. But the remembrance of death shall not be terrifying, but agreeable. A comparison of the present with the former state, will only tend to enhance their pleasure; to excite high admiration of that power, which produced the surprising change, and give peculiar ardour to their adorations of that grace which prepared them for it.—In short, the Lord of life shall so entirely change the scene, that all remainders of death shall be done away, and nothing shall appear by which it might be known, that it ever had the least dominion over any of his faithful servants. I shall sum up all in the striking words of the apostle; *It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*‖. It doth not yet appear what we shall be! No, not *yet*, what we shall be *then*: For although our understanding is the distinction of our

* Rev. xxi. 4. † Vid. Grot. & Whitby in loc. ‡ Job iii. 21, 22. § Lam. iii. 19. ‖ 1 John iii. 2.

nature, and our tongue the glory of our frame, the one is overwhelmed when it labours to comprehend, and the other forced into silence when it attempts to describe, the objects and glories of immortality. And therefore, without presuming to take in the full meaning of the following words.——*But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*—We may venture to conclude, that we shall hereafter be blessed with an immediate, permanent, and influential vision of the Lord of life and glory; and such a vision, attended with vital beams surrounding us on every side, transfusing themselves through our whole frame, invigorating the divine life in us, and maintaining and increasing our sensible and intellectual joys, must import complete and everlasting happiness.

Having thus illustrated the remarks founded on the text, I am now to direct you to the proper improvement of so noble and interesting a subject. Let me then entreat your attention to the following

REFLECTIONS.

Let us contemplate the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, so illustriously displayed in this triumph over death.

*It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory*, to appoint his son *the Captain of their Salvation*, and *to consecrate him* to that office *through sufferings*. He took part of flesh and blood, that he might be capable of dying, and through death destroy him, or weaken, and render ineffectual his influence, that had the power of death, that is, the devil *; who by his temptations, brought sin and death into the world. He died to vanquish the terrors of death, and reconcile our minds to the thoughts and approaches of it. To this work he was set apart by his father and God; and he alone was fit for the work, and worthy the honour of overcoming the *king of terrors*. And because, for this end, he became *obedient to death, even the death of the cross, God has highly exalted him*, constituted him Lord *both of the dead and the living*, lodged the *Keys of death, and the invisible world*, in his hands, and *given him power over all flesh*, that *he should give eternal life* to all his sincere and genuine disciples. *He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*, and death, the chief and last of them, be destroyed.—These, brethren and fellow-christians, are the reviving truths of

* Heb. ii. 10, 14.

our holy religion: Let us then *rejoice in Christ Jesus*, and glory in our relation to him, who, by his atoning sacrifice, took away the *Sting of death, which is sin*, bore in his own body, the penalty denounced against transgressors, and by the influences of his spirit, promotes a holy temper and conversation, which is the only proper qualification for a blessed and joyful resurrection. We are directed to consider him as the *Resurrection and the life*, who is to come in power and glory to judge the world, the lustre of whose appearance shall penetrate to the deepest grave, and whose voice shall awaken every sleeping saint.—Then shall they come forth to join their glorified Head and Saviour, to attend and grace the solemnity of that day, which shall complete his conquest over death, and terminate his mediatorial kingdom.—Since then *we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*, let this encrease our veneration for his gospel, which contains the record of eternal life; and with an eye of gratitude, love, and humble dependence, let us *look to Jesus the Lord of life, who, for the joy that was set before him*, of being himself highly exalted, and leading on all his good soldiers to conquest and to crowns, overcame the sharpness of death, and *is now set down at the right hand of God.* Let him be precious to our souls, who is the purchaser and author of eternal salvation.

2. Let us reflect on the difference between good and bad men with regard to the consequences of death.

This conqueror hath dominion over all: Nevertheless, all shall rise again. But oh! with what different appearances, and to what different states! *Some shall awake to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt* *. All shall come forth of their graves, but with this awful distinction, *They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation* †. With what horror and surprise will the wicked lift up their heads in that tremendous day, and how glad will they be to sink back to rottenness, or even to nothing, from the wrath of the Lamb! But they must come forth, although their bodies should be so changed, as to be capable of more exquisite pain, and a more lasting duration, than their present frame will admit of. They shall have their part in the *Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death* ‡, which shall be executed

* Dan. xii. 2. † John v. 29. ‡ Rev. xxi. 8.

with circumstances of terror and anguish, proportioned to their crimes.—On the other hand; with what a blooming air and inconceivable transport will the saints lift up their heads in that glorious day! With what unutterable delight will they leave their dusty beds, and survey their empty tombs; knowing that their *warfare is accomplished*, and that their Lord, whose approach they hail with the loudest hosannas, *cometh to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe!* Having through the *grace of Christ*, which *is sufficient* even for the weakest of his servants, overcome and been faithful to the end, they *Shall not be hurt by the second death**, they shall not *die for ever*, but enter into eternal rest. And do you believe, brethren, that there will be such a vast difference between the future states of the righteous, and the wicked? I know you believe it. Enquire then, what influence and effect this faith hath upon your hearts and lives; and which of these two states will be yours. Let me address you in the words of the great Mr. Howe †: "You can never justify it to God, or your own understandings, to remain in a dubious uncertainty about a matter of so vast consequence as this. Unconcernedness here is the most unaccountable thing in the whole world. Things will come to this issue very shortly with us that either *death* must, as to us, be *swallowed up in victory*, or we be *swallowed up* of victorious death. With what solicitude should we all concern ourselves to be at a certainty!" If you would desire that strong consolation which the text exhibits, let me urge you to *fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before you*, to be daily exercising *Repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem your time*, and make a wise improvement of the present life. Thus you *will finish your course with joy*, and when *This earthly house of your tabernacle is dissolved, you will have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*‡.

Lastly, Let the servants of Christ be calm and resigned, in the view of their own death, and when their pious friends are removed.

One would think there should be no occasion for such an exhortation as this, to any who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and have peace with God through him. One would naturally suppose that in the fulness of their hopes and joys, they would *desire to depart*, and it would be necessary frequently and strenuously to urge them to *wait patiently* for the coming

* Rev. ii. 11. † Howe's works, vol. II. page 422. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 1.

of the Lord. One would think that instead of sorrowing, as those who have no hope, for them that sleep in Jesus, they should rather *rejoice* for the victory they have gained and the honour to which they are advanced. But alas! such is the unreasonable and unhappy influence which present things have upon our minds, such is the weakness of our faith and hope, so languid is our love to Christ, and so injudicious our affection to our friends, that we are loth to remove ourselves, and unwilling to part with them. God knew it would be so. He knows our frame, and remembers we are dust, and therefore pities us, and has laid in such a stock of encouragements in his word, to counteract the bias of nature, and to correct the errors of sense. Let us then, brethren, enter into the spirit, and admit the force of them. Remember, that although the combat may be sharp, and the apprehension grievous, yet the victory is sure. The enemy has been often vanquished, and it is only a single feeble effort he can possibly make. *Fear not*, says the Redeemer, *I am he that liveth and was dead, and am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and the unseen world.* Fear not this formidable enemy. He has slain his thousands; slain, did I say? rather, he has obtained some little advantage to his own irreparable loss and their everlasting gain. Though he strips you of the body, yet, to allude to St. Paul's words, you only part with it *For a season, that you may receive it for ever**, improved and beautified, and no more to see corruption. Let every sincere christian, endeavour, from such considerations, to reconcile his mind to the approaches of death, and wish to encounter this last enemy, as a brave soldier does to enter upon an action, which he has the greatest reason to believe will finish the war, put an end to all his fatigues, perils, and terrors, and bring repose, honour, and reward. Frequently meditate, O christian, on that glorious morning, when thou shalt awake, burst the bands of death with sweet and inexpressible surprise, arise with ten thousands of thy fellow-saints, and meet thy Lord with songs of triumph, and everlasting joy upon your heads. Then shall he applaud thy resolution and labour, fidelity and patience, before his father, the angels, and the assembled world, and give thee a *Crown of glory, that fadeth not away.*

Let these considerations also support our minds when our pious and valuable friends are removed.

*Philem. verse 15.

In this view the apostle urges them, *If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him; the dead in Christ shall rise first,* and the saints, then alive, *being changed, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words**. And surely no words can be more full of consolation. Our pious friends departed, have gained the victory, and are *present with the Lord.* And though we are left behind in a world, which is, at best, a tiresome place, and less desirable since they were removed from it; yet we hope ere long to be restored to them, to converse with them upon more agreeable and advantageous terms, and spend an eternity together. If we are *followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises,* God will quickly call us to come up to them, and send a convoy of angels to fetch us to the world of spirits; and perhaps the first objects we may meet with there, may be some of our most intimate friends, sent to congratulate our safe arrival, and conduct us to the appointed mansions. And oh! with what joy and transport shall we meet them, and be welcomed by them. The small space of time the separation has continued, and in which we have known the sorrow of living without them, will endear them to us, and increase our bliss. Especially when we consider that there is no fear of another separation, that the *Destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end* †; and that death has yielded up all his power ever to divide us more.

Let me particularly apply these consolations to you, my friends, on occasion of the sore breach, God has made upon you. What joy has it already been to your late worthy and pious pastor, to meet so many of his flock in the regions of the blessed, to whom he administered these precious consolations in their last moments, and smoothed their passage to heaven! What joy will it be to him to receive one and another of you, who have obeyed the gospel, to be partakers of his felicity! What a delight will it be to him to receive your thanks, for all his labours of love for the good of your souls, and join with you in adoring that grace, which wrought effectually for your salvation; to which grace, you well know, he constantly ascribed his abilities and success! What joy will it afford you to meet him there; to inform him more fully than you can now do, what pleasure and improvement you have received from

* 1 Thess. iv. 14—18. compared with 1 Cor. xv. 51, &c. † Ps. ix. 6.

his labours while he lived, and his writings, by which *being dead*, he is still *speaking* to you, with the most serious and affectionate address, and the most insinuating eloquence! And with regard to him and all your brethren, who shall at length meet in our Father's house; how will mutual joy flow from heart to heart, when every enemy is conquered, and the tyranny of death at an end! to be for ever instructing, improving, and entertaining one another; to recount your many struggles, temptations and victories; and trace out the wonderous steps by which you were conducted to this happiness! These friendly dispositions will be carried to the greatest height, conversation will never grow dull, and social entertainments never cloy. Fresh delight will be springing up in his soul, and yours, through eternity; in observing each other's improving knowledge and holiness, and sharing together in the smiles of the Redeemer, and the work and happiness of heaven.

After such comfortable thoughts as these, I have very little heart to renew, and increase your sorrows and my own, by entering into any particulars of the character of that great and good man, whom God has removed from us. Nor is it necessary I should; as he has been so long among you, and so faithfully and constantly watched over you. I may appeal to you all, that you have *Fully known his doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecution, and afflictions**, and his *Care of the churches*†. He has been labouring among you with unexampled diligence, and unwearied zeal, above twenty years, with increasing honour, comfort and success. Notwithstanding his other most important relations, as a tutor, and the weight of business he continually had on his hands, he was, in labours for your souls, abundant; warning, encouraging and comforting, with all the marks of a deep sense of religion upon his own soul, the most tender affection to you and your families, and the utmost solicitude for your everlasting welfare. The same disposition he carried with him in all his visits, and mingled the seriousness and piety of the christian minister with the politeness of the gentleman, and the freedom and cheerfulness of the friend. His great concern for the rising generation, was manifested in his discourses on education from the pulpit and the press, and the most affectionate addresses to your children in his catechetical lectures, and occasional visits. Ye know how heartily and compassionately he entered into your personal and relative afflictions; how many disconsolate hearts

* 2 Tim. iii. 10. † 1 Tim. iii. 5.

he has made to rejoice by his liberality, his counsels, and his prayers. Ye know his faithfulness and gentleness in brotherly reproof, and the exercise of godly discipline. In a word, ye know, that, to his power, and, unhappily for his family, for you and other churches, beyond his power, he went about doing good, piously devising, and with the most resolute application, executing so many generous designs for the public good.—— *Ye are witnesses, and God also,* how much his public addresses were illustrated and enforced by his own temper, and conduct, and *how holily, and justly, and unblameably he behaved himself among you.*——By his writings, the value of which will, I am persuaded, be continually increasing, the world will judge, what a pastor God had favoured you with, and how very well you have been fed and taught for so many years. And they will naturally and justly expect, that you should be wise and judicious christians, and eminent for every branch of the christian temper. And great will be your guilt and your shame if you are not.

But, *Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you;* and my persuasion is founded partly on my own knowledge of your temper and character, and partly on the solemn testimony your late pastor has borne to the goodness of them, in a passage in his last will, which he desired might be communicated to you on this occasion, and which I mention with pleasure, as it is at once for your honour and your admonition. Speaking of his intention of being interred in the place of your meeting, he says, "where I have spent the most delightful hours of my life, in assisting the devotions of as serious, as grateful, and as deserving a people, as perhaps any minister had ever the honour and happiness to serve; cheerfully persuading myself, that, when I am dead, they will hear me speaking in my writings with all due regard; and making it my last request to them, that those of them who have, or can borrow, my Family Expositor, will read it over in their families once at least, beginning the Lord's-day after my funeral; and that they would also read over in their families, on Lord's-day evenings, all my sermons which they have, or can borrow, especially those on Regeneration, those on the Glory and Grace of Christ, the sermons to Young Persons, and that on the *one thing needful;* and I desire that every parent, that can procure them, would read in their retirements, my sermons on the Education of Children, within one quarter of a year at least after my death. And I make this request from an affectionate desire of the edification and salvation of souls; and an

humble hope that, in consequence of it, I may glorify God, even when I am laid in the dust."

I hope, my friends, you will pay a serious and constant regard to this his last request, out of gratitude for his services, and veneration for his memory; from a concern for your own further credit and comfort, and a desire to increase his joy, and your own, at the day of the Lord.

As to you, my brethren and friends, who were more immediately under his eye and care; God has taken your master from your head: And you will naturally adopt the mournful words of Elisha, when he had lost his tutor Elijah, *My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof* *! He was indeed a Father to you: And I believe there are few of us, who have had the advantage of being his pupils, have found more real affection and tenderness, and a warmer concern for our welfare, in our natural parents, than we have found in him. You remember his quickness of apprehension, and remarkable felicity in the dispatch of business, and yet his most exemplary improvement and redemption of time. You know, how faithfully he devoted his time and abilities to your service. How freely he communicated to you out of those large stores of knowledge with which God had furnished him: How fairly and candidly he proposed arguments and objections on every topic, on which he lectured. What pains he took to make you eminent christians, able ministers of the New Testament, and scribes well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven. You will, I am persuaded, join with me in acknowledging, to the praise of God, that our acquaintance with him, and relation to him, has been our honour and our happiness. May you and I remember his paternal counsels, prayers, and example, that, through a supply of the Spirit of Jesus, we may be fitted for eminent usefulness in the church, and may do honour to his memory and instructions!

It is but a just tribute to the worth of eminently wise and useful men, and of great advantage to survivors, to display at large the virtues of their character, and point out the means by which they became so eminent; and I am not without hope, that justice may hereafter be done, in some distinct account, to the distinguished abilities, eminent character, and extensive usefulness of the late reverend and learned Dr. Doddridge, who shone so conspicuously in the relations of a minister and a tutor, and whose writings are in such general esteem. In the mean

* 2 Kings ii. 12.

time what has been said concerning him, may serve to excite you all, to aspire after a temper and behaviour becoming your relation to him, whose removal, in the vigour of his faculties, we so justly, and shall so long lament; and, to add greater weight to the solemn exhortation of St. Paul to the Philippians, which, upon this occasion, I would address to you all: *Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen* in him, *do: and the God of peace shall be with you* *.

To conclude: God has seen fit to call home his *good* and *faithful servant;* and given him not only a calm, but a joyful dismission from the labours and sufferings of life, and enabled him thereby to triumph over death. And when we recollect the words we have been meditating upon, and this fresh seal to the truth and the comfort of them; and when by faith we look forward to that *weight of glory* reserved in heaven for us, and our pious friends; let us even now join in the apostle's triumphant song, and say, *Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*† Amen.

* Phil. iv. 9. † 1 Cor. xv. 57.

# HYMNS

## FOUNDED ON VARIOUS TEXTS,

IN THE

## HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I ESTEEM NEPOS FOR HIS FAITH AND DILIGENCE, HIS COMMENTS ON SCRIPTURE, AND MANY HYMNS, WITH WHICH THE BRETHREN ARE DELIGHTED.—EUSEB. ECCL. HIS. L. VII. C. 24.

# PREFACE.

THE author of the following hymns, well known to the world by many excellent and useful writings, was much solicited by his friends to print them in his life-time, from a hope they might be serviceable to the interest of religion, by assisting the devotion of christians in their social and secret worship; and, had God continued his life till his Family Expositor on the epistles had been published, it is probable he would have complied with their request: But this and many other pious and benevolent purposes were broken off by his much lamented death. During the last hour I spent with him, a few weeks before that mournful event, he honoured me with some particular directions about transcribing and publishing them. I have at length, through the good hand of my God upon me, finished them, and present them to the world with a cheerful hope, that they will promote and diffuse a spirit of devotion, and, together with other assistances human and divine, prepare many to join with the devout author in the nobler and everlasting anthems of heaven.

These hymns being composed to be sung, after the author had been preaching on the texts prefixed to them, it was his design, that they should bring over again the leading thoughts in the sermon, and naturally express and warmly enforce those devout sentiments, which he hoped were then rising in the minds of his hearers, and help to fix them on the memory and heart: Accordingly the attentive reader will observe, that most of them illustrate such sentiments as a skilful preacher would principally insist upon, when discoursing from the texts on which they are founded. There is a great variety in the form of them: Some are devout paraphrases on the texts: Others expressive of lively acts of devotion, faith, and trust in God, love to Christ, desire of divine influences, and good resolutions of cultivating the temper and practising the duties recommended: Others proclaim an humble joy and triumph in the gracious promises and encouragements of scripture, particularly in the discovery and prospect of eternal life. The nature of the subjects will easily account for the difference of composure, why some are more plain and artless, others more lively, sublime, and full of poetic fire. If any of them should at first reading appear flat or obscure, it may well be supposed they would affect the mind in a stronger manner, when used in a religious assembly after sermons upon the texts, in which the context hath been considered (if that were necessary) parallel places compared, the design of the inspired writer judiciously opened, and the beauty, propriety, and emphasis of the several clauses of the text illustrated: They therefore who use them in their devout retirements, should first read and consider the text and contexts, and if they would consult some expositor upon them, particularly the authors on the subjects taken from the New Testament, they will see a spirit and elegance in these composures, which may otherwise be overlooked, and be more likely to reap real and lasting advantage by them.

In this collection there are many hymns formed upon passages in the Old Testament, particularly in the prophets, directly relating to the case of the Israelites, or some particular good man among them, which the author hath accommodated to the circumstances of christians, where he thought there was a just and natural resemblance; and he apprehended, that the practice of the inspired writers of the New Testament warranted such accommodations*. He experienced this to be a very acceptable and useful method of preaching on the Old Testament, and accordingly recommended it to his pupils, as what would afford them an opportunity of explaining the design of the prophecies, displaying the wisdom, faithfulness and

* Compare Heb. xiii. 5, 6. and Family Expositor in Loc. Note *(e)*. There are also some good remarks on this subject in Dr. Watts's holiness of times, places, &c. Dis. v. especially Prop. 15.

grace of God, and suggesting many striking and important instructions: This method would at the same time occasion an agreeable variety in their discourses, prevent their confining themselves to general or common-place subjects, (or in order to avoid a frequent repetition of well known arguments) running into dry and abstruse speculations, which the capacities of the generality of their hearers could not comprehend, nor their hearts relish and feel: A fashion in preaching too prevalent, and, considering its apparent unprofitableness, much to be lamented.

Those young ministers, who are desirous of entering into the spirit and copiousness of scripture, may find this work greatly useful to them, by directing them to many very suitable texts, and to some natural thoughts, and useful reflections to be insisted upon in discoursing from them.

There are several hymns in this collection suited to special and extraordinary occasions, for which there was not before a sufficient provision; such as, for opening a new place of worship, the vacancy and settlement of churches, the ordination of ministers, their removal from our world, &c. especially for days of fasting and humiliation on account of actual or apprehended calamities; the want of which, during the late rebellion and war, was much regretted by many ministers and private christians.

In these composures I hope few low or trivial expressions will be found: Nothing appears unsuitable to the gravity and dignity of a worshipping assembly: Nothing likely to darken or damp the devotion of the humble christian, or excite passions merely sensual. There is nothing that savours of a party-spirit, or carries an appearance of designing to confine their use to any of the sects into which christians are unhappily divided. The materials are divine, and the author's soul was never more enlarged, than when he was promoting a spirit of piety and candor in their just connection.

I chose to place these hymns in the order in which the several texts lie in the bible, as that prevents the necessity of another index, and there appeared no particular reason for disposing them in any different order. In a few places, where words occur not sufficiently intelligible to common readers, I have added some more plain and familiar ones in the margin, that they may be read and sung with understanding; preferring this method to that of some authors, who have collected and explained them in a particular index.

As these hymns were composed during a series of many years, amidst an uncommon variety and daily succession of most important labours, by a man who had no ear for music, and as they want his retouching hand, the reader will be candid to what inaccuracies he may discover, particularly the repetition of the same thoughts and phrases, which in a few instances will be found: And indeed some of them could scarcely be avoided on subjects so nearly resembling, without the exclusion of the most suitable and affecting sentiments or aspirations, for which the introduction of a new or more poetic thought and phrase would not have been an equivalent. There may perhaps be some improprieties, owing to my not being able to read the author's manuscript in particular places, and being obliged, without a poetic genius, to supply those deficiencies, whereby the beauty of the stanza may be greatly defaced, though the sense is preserved.

These hymns being originally designed for the use of a congregation of plain unlearned christians, it cannot be expected they should entertain those, who may peruse them merely for the sake of the poetry: Yet I think many of them will stand the test of a critical examination, and appear at least equal to other compositions of the like kind; and I am persuaded they will all be delightful and beneficial to those, who desire to have their devotions enlivened, their souls filled with divine love, and who are ambitious to live up to the rules of the gospel; and that they will, through the influences of the Holy Ghost, spread a spirit of fervent piety in such congregations where they may be introduced.

I have nothing to add but my earnest wishes and prayers, that they may be subservient to the glory of God, the more delightful celebration of divine ordinances, and the edification of my fellow-christians. Amen.

*JOB ORTON.*

SALOP, *Jan.* 1, 1755.

# HYMNS

FOUNDED ON VARIOUS TEXTS IN THE

## OLD TESTAMENT.

I. *Enoch's Piety and Translation.* Genesis v. 24. Hebrews xi. 5.

1 ETERNAL God, our wond'ring souls
Admire thy matchless grace;
That thou wilt walk, that thou wilt dwell,
With Adam's worthless race.

2 O lead me to that happy path,
Where I my God may meet;
Though hosts of foes begird it round,
Though briars wound my feet.

3 Cheer'd with thy converse, I can trace
The desart with delight:
Through all the gloom one smile of thine
Can dissipate the night.

4 Nor shall I through eternal days
A restless pilgrim roam;
Thy hand, that now directs my course,
Shall soon convey me home.

5 I ask not Enoch's rapturous flight
To realms of heavenly day;
Nor seek Elijah's fiery steeds
To bear this flesh away.

6 Joyful my spirit will consent
To drop its mortal load;
And hail * the sharpest pangs of death,
That break its way to God.

II. *God's gracious Approbation of a religious Care of our Families.* Genesis xviii. 19.

1 FATHER of men, thy care we bless,
Which crowns our families with peace:
From thee they sprung, and by thy hand
Their root and branches are sustain'd.

* Salute or welcome.

2 To God, most worthy to be prais'd,
Be our domestic altars rais'd;
Who, Lord of heaven, scorns not to dwell
With saints in their obscurest cell.

3 To thee may each united house,
Morning and night, present its vows:
Our servants there, and rising race
Be taught thy precepts, and thy grace.

4 O may each future age proclaim
The honours of thy glorious name;
While pleas'd, and thankful, we remove
To join the family above.

III. *Abraham's Intercession for Sodom.* Genesis xviii. 32.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 GREAT God! did pious Abram pray
For Sodom's vile abandon'd race?
And shall not all our souls be rous'd
For Britain to implore thy grace?

2 Base as we are, does not thine eye
Its chosen thousands here survey;
Whose souls, deep humbled, mourn the crowds,
Who walk in sin's destructive way?

3 O Judge supreme, let not thy sword
The righteous with the wicked smite:
Nor bury in promiscuous heaps
Rebels, and saints thy chief delight.

4 For these thy children spare the land;
Avert the thunders big with death;
Nor let the seeds of latent * fire
Be kindled by thy flaming breath.

5 O! be not angry, mighty God,
While dust and ashes seek thy face;
But gently bending from thy throne,
Renew, and still increase the grace.

6 Jesus the intercessor hear,
And for his sake thy grace impart,
Which, while it stops the fiery stream,
Dissolves the most obdurate heart.

7 Sodom shall change to Zion then,
And heavenly dews be scatter'd round,
That plants of paradise may spring,
Where baleful † poisons curs'd the ground.

* Hidden, secret. † Destructive.

IV. *Jacob's Vow.* Genesis xxviii. 20—22.

1 O GOD of Jacob, by whose hand
Thine Israel still is fed,
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

2 To thee our humble vows we raise,
To thee address our prayer,
And in thy kind and faithful breast
Deposit all our care.

3 If thou, through each perplexing path,
Wilt be our constant guide;
If thou wilt daily bread supply,
And raiment wilt provide;

4 If thou wilt spread thy shield around,
Till these our wand'rings cease,
And at our Father's lov'd abode
Our souls arrive in peace:

5 To thee, as to our Covenant-God,
We'll our whole selves resign;
And count, that not our tenth alone,
But all we have is thine.

V. *The Hand of the Lord upon the Cattle.* Exodus ix. 3.

1 THE creatures, Lord, confess thy hand,
Through earth and sky, through sea and land;
And all their meanest orders share
Their Maker's pity, and his care.

2 O look from thine exalted throne,
And hear our panting cattle moan;
Prone* o'er th' untasted food they lie,
Groan out their agonies, and die.

3 What have these harmless creatures done
To draw this sore chastisement down?
'Tis human guilt for vengeance calls,
And heavy on the herds it falls.

4 From them to us the stroke might pass,
And mow down thousands of our race;
Till desolation reign'd around,
Our cities void, untill'd our ground.

5 Prevent the ruin by thy grace,
And melt our hearts to seek thy face:
Blest fruit of thy correcting rod
To lose our beasts, and find our God.

* Stretched out on the ground.

VI. *Israel and Amalek.* Exodus xvii. 11.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 OUR Banner is th' eternal God,
Nor will we yield to fear;
Amidst ten thousand fierce assaults,
His mighty aid is near.

2 To him the hands of faith we stretch,
And plead experienc'd grace;
To him the voice of prayer we raise,
Nor will he hide his face.

3 No more, proud Amalek, thy boast,
"God's arm is feeble grown:"
His sword shall lop off every hand
That dares insult his throne.

4 Awake, tremendous Judge, awake
Our nation's cause to plead;
Nor let thine Israel's foes, and thine,
By wickedness succeed.

5 Our fainting hands, how soon they droop!
But thou the weak canst raise;
And in the mount of prayer canst leave
An altar to thy praise.

VII. *Against following a Multitude to do Evil.* Exodus xxiii. 2.

1 LORD, when iniquities abound,
And growing crimes appear;
We view the deluge rising round
With sorrow, and with fear.

2 Yet when its waves most fiercely beat,
And spread destruction wide,
Thy Spirit can a standard raise
To stem * the roaring tide.

3 May thy triumphant arm awake
Thy sacred cause to plead;
And let the multitude confess,
That thou art God indeed.

4 Their hearts shall in a moment turn,
Like water, by thy hand;
One word shall bow their stubborn necks
To own thy high command.

5 Our feeble souls at least support,
And there thy power display;
Then multitudes shall strive in vain
To draw us from thy way.

*Restrain.

VIII. *Christ's Intercession typified by Aaron's Breast-plate.* Ex. xxviii. 29.

1 NOW let our cheerful eyes survey
Our great high Priest above,
And celebrate his constant care,
And sympathetic love.

2 Though rais'd to a superior throne,
Where angels bow around,
And high o'er all the shining train
With matchless honours crown'd;

3 The names of all his saints he bears
Deep graven on his heart;
Nor shall the meanest christian say,
That he hath lost his part.

4 Those characters shall fair abide,
Our everlasting trust,
When gems, and monuments, and crowns
Are moulder'd down to dust.

5 So, gracious Saviour, on my breast
May thy dear name be worn,
A sacred ornament and guard,
To endless ages borne.

IX. *Who is on the Lord's Side?* Ex. xxxiii. 26.

1 WHAT bosom mov'd with pious zeal
Doth for its God's dishonour feel?
What heart with generous ardor glows
To plead his cause against his foes?

2 Great God, what bosom can be cold?
What coward must not here grow bold?
While honour, interest, truth and love
Concur our inmost souls to move?

3 Around thy standard, Lord, we press,
Thine injur'd honour to redress,
And with determin'd voice demand
The signal of thy conquering hand.

4 Thou shalt these sacred weapons bless,
And lead through war to endless peace
Not death itself our souls shall dread,
For thine own arm shall raise the dead.

X. *God's Presence desirable.* Ex. xxxiii. 15.

1 IMMENSE, eternal God!
How marvellous thy name!

Thy presence all abroad
Pervades all nature's frame;
Heaven, earth, and air,
And the dark cell
Where devils dwell
In long despair.

2 Yet thou hast chosen ways
To make thy presence known
To favourites of thy grace,
To upright souls alone:
This glory, Lord,
My soul would see,
This grace to me,
My God, afford.

3 If thou thy lustre veil,
The charms of nature fade;
All wither'd, weak, and pale,
They bow their languid head.
My father, shine;
For thou canst give
The dead to live
By beams divine.

4 Even Eden's blisful lands
Would in thine absence mourn:
But thou wild Afric's sands
To paradise canst turn.
If God be there
The gloom is bright:
But noon is night,
Till thou appear.

5 Come, for my spirit glows
With infinite desire!
Strong love impatient grows,
And sets my heart on fire.
My father, come;
That presence give,
On which I live;
Or call me home.

XI. *Moses's View of the divine Glory.* Ex. xxxiii. 18.

1 WITH humble pleasure, Lord, we trace
The ancient records of thy grace;
And our own consolation draw,
From what thy servant Moses saw.

2 May we behold thy glory shine,
With gentle beams of love divine;
And hear thy secret voice proclaim
The various wonders of thy name.

3 If feeble nature faint t' endure
A voice so sweet, a ray so pure;
Its dissolution would delight,
While death would wear a form so bright.

4 Death shall unveil that world above,
Where the dear children of thy love,
Attempered * all to heavenly day,
Bear, and reflect th' immediate ray.

XII. *The Proclamation of God's Name to Moses; or, divine Mercy and Justice.* Ex. xxxiv. 6—8.

1 ATTEND, my soul, the voice divine,
And mark what beaming glories shine
Around thy condescending God!
To us, to us he still proclaims
His awful, his endearing names:
Attend, and sound them all abroad.

2 "Jehovah I, the sovereign Lord,
"The mighty God, by heaven ador'd,
"Down to the earth my footsteps bend:
"My heart the tenderest pity knows,
"Goodness full-streaming wide o'erflows,
"And grace and truth shall never end.

3 "My patience long can crimes endure:
"My pardoning love is ever sure,
"When penitential sorrow mourns;
"To millions, through unnumber'd years,
"New hope and new delight it bears;
"Yet wrath against the sinner burns."

4 Make haste, my soul, the vision meet,
All prostrate at thy sovereign's feet,
And drink the tuneful accents in;
Speak on, my Lord, repeat the voice,
Diffuse these heart-expanding joys,
Till heaven complete the rapturous scene.

XIII. *The God of Spirits sought to supply Vacancies in the Congregations of his People.* Num. xxvii. 15—17.

1 FATHER of spirits, from thy hand,
Our souls immortal came;
And still thine energy divine
Supports th' ethereal flame.

* Fitted and enabled to bear.

2 By thee our spirits all are known ;
And each remotest thought
Lies wide expanded to his eye,
By whom their powers were wrought.

3 To thee, when mortal comforts fail,
Thy flock deserted flies ;
And, on th' eternal shepherd's care,
Our cheerful hope relies.

4 When o'er thy faithful servant's dust
Thy dear assemblies mourn,
In speedy tokens of thy grace,
O Israel's God, return.

5 The powers of nature all are thine,
And thine the aids of grace ;
Thine arm has borne thy churches up
Through every rising race.

6 Exert thy sacred influence here,
And here thy suppliants bless,
And change, to strains of cheerful praise,
Their accents of distress.

7 With faithful heart, with skilful hand,
May this thy flock be fed ;
And with a steady growing pace
To Zion's mountain led.

XIV. *The Lord's People his Portion.* Deut. xxxii. 9.

1 SOVEREIGN of nature, all is thine,
The air, the earth, the sea :
By thee the orbs celestial shine,
And cherubs live by thee.

2 Rich in thine own essential store ;
Thou call'st forth worlds at will:
Ten thousand, and ten thousand more
Would hear thy summons still.

3 What treasure wilt thou then confess ?
And thy own portion call ?
What by peculiar right possess,
Imperial Lord of all ?

4 Thine Israel thou wilt stoop to claim,
Wilt mark them out for thine :
Ten thousand praises to thy name
For goodness so divine !

5 That I am thine, my soul would boast,
And boast its claim to thee ;
Nor shall God's property be lost,
Nor God be torn from me.

XV. *The eternal God his People's Refuge and Support.* Deut. xxxiii. 27.

1 BEHOLD the great eternal God,
Spreads everlasting arms abroad,
And calls our souls to shelter there;
Wonders of mingled power and grace
To all his Israel he displays,
Guarded from danger, and from fear.

2 Thither my feeble soul shall fly,
When terrors press, and death is nigh,
And there will I delight to dwell;
On that high tower I rear my head
Serene, nor knows my heart to dread,
Amidst surrounding hosts of hell.

3 The shadow of the Almighty's wings
Composure unmolested brings,
While threat'ning horrors round me crowd;
In vain the storms of rattling hail
The walls of this retreat assail,
And the wild tempest roars aloud.

4 In louder strains my fearless tongue
Shall warble its victorious song,
My Father's graces to proclaim;
He bears his infant offspring on
To glory radiant as his throne,
And joys eternal as his name.

XVI. *The Happiness of God's Israel.* Deut. xxxiii. 29.

1 O Israel, blest beyond compare!
Unrivaled all thy glories are:
Jehovah deigns to fill thy throne,
And calls thine interest all his own.

2 He is thy Saviour; he thy Lord;
His shield is thine; and thine his sword:
Review in ecstasy of thought
The grand redemption he has wrought.

3 From Satan's yoke he sets thee free,
Opens thy passage through the sea;
He through the desart is thy guide,
And heaven for Canaan will provide.

4 Not Jacob's sons of old could boast
Such favours to their chosen host;
Their glories, which through ages shine,
Are but dim shades, and types of thine.

5 Celestial Spirit, teach our tongue
Sublimer strains than Moses sung,
Proportioned to the sweeter name
Of God the Saviour, and the Lamb.

XVII. *Support in the gracious Presence of God under the Loss of Ministers, and other useful Friends.* Joshua i. 2, 4, 5.

1 NOW let our mourning hearts revive,
And all our tears be dry;
Why should those eyes be drowned in grief,
Which view a Saviour nigh?

2 What though the arm of conquering death
Does God's own house invade?
What though the prophet, and the priest
Be numbered with the dead?

3 Though earthly shepherds dwell in dust,
The aged, and the young,
The watchful eye in darkness closed,
And mute the instructive tongue;

4 Th' eternal shepherd still survives,
New comfort to impart;
His eye still guides us, and his voice
Still animates our heart.

5 "Lo, I am with you," saith the Lord,
"My church shall safe abide;
"For I will ne'er forsake my own,
"Whose souls in me confide."

6 Through every scene of life and death,
This promise is our trust;
And this shall be our children's song,
When we are cold in dust.

XVIII. *God insensibly withdrawn.* Judges xvi. 20.

1 A Present God is all our strength,
And all our joy and hope;
When he withdraws, our comforts die,
And every grace must droop.

2 But flattering trifles charm our hearts
To court their false embrace,
Till justly this neglected friend
Averts his angry face.

3 He leaves us, and we miss him not;
But go presumptuous on,
Till baffled, wounded, and enslaved,
We learn, that God is gone.

4 And what, my soul, can then remain
One ray of light to give?
Sever'd from him, their better life,
How can his children live?

5 Hence, all ye painted forms of joy,
And leave my heart to mourn;
I would devote these eyes to tears,
Till cheer'd by his return.

6 Look back, my Lord, and own the place,
Where once thy temple stood;
For lo, its ruins bear the mark
Of rich atoning blood.

XIX. *Ebenezer; or, God's helping Hand reviewed and acknowledged.* 1 Sam. vii. 12.

FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 MY helper God! I bless his name:
The same his power, his grace the same,
The tokens of his friendly care
Open, and crown, and close the year.

2 I 'midst ten thousand dangers stand,
Supported by his guardian hand;
And see, when I survey my ways,
Ten thousand monuments of praise.

3 Thus far his arm hath led me on;
Thus far I make his mercy known;
And, while I tread this desart land,
New mercies shall new songs demand.

4 My grateful soul, on Jordan's shore,
Shall raise one sacred pillar more:
Then bear, in his bright courts above,
Inscriptions of immortal love.

XX. *The Saint encouraging himself in the Lord his God.* 1 Sam. xxx. 6.

1 JEHOVAH, 'tis a glorious name,
Still pregnant with delight;
It scatters round a cheerful beam,
To gild the darkest night.

2 What though our mortal comforts fade,
And drop like withering flowers;
Nor time nor death can break that band,
Which makes Jehovah ours.

3 My cares, I give you to the wind,
And shake you off like dust;
Well may I trust my all with him,
With whom my soul I trust.

XXI. *Support in God's Covenant under domestic Troubles.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

1 MY God, the covenant of thy love
Abides for ever sure,
And in its matchless grace I feel
My happiness secure.

2 What though my house be not with thee,
As nature could desire;
To nobler joys than nature gives
Thy servants all aspire.

3 Since thou, the everlasting God,
My Father art become;
Jesus my guardian, and my friend,
And heaven my final home:

4 I welcome all thy sovereign will,
For all that will is love;
And when I know not what thou dost,
I wait the light above.

5 Thy covenant in the darkest gloom
Shall heavenly rays impart;
Which, when my eye-lids close in death,
Shall warm my chilling heart.

XXII. *Support in God's Covenant in the near Views of Death.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 1 and 5 compared.

1 'TIS mine, the covenant of his grace,
And every promise mine!
All sprung from everlasting love,
And seal'd by blood divine.

2 On my unworthy favour'd head
Its blessings all unite;
Blessings more numerous than the stars,
More lasting, and more bright.

3 Death, thou may'st tear this rag of flesh,
And sink my fainting head;
And lay my ruins in the grave,
Among my kindred dead:

4 But death and hell in vain shall strive
To break that sacred rest,
Which God's expiring children feel,
While leaning on his breast.

5 Th' enlarged soul thou canst not reach,
Nor rend from Christ away;
Though o'er my mouldering dust thou boast
The triumphs of a day.

6 The night is past, my morning dawns;
My covenant-God descends,
And wakes that dust to join my soul
In bliss that never ends.

7 That cov'nant the last accent claims
Of this poor faltering tongue;
And that shall the first notes employ
Of my celestial song.

XXIII. *Rejoicing in our Covenant-engagements to God.* 2 Chron. xv. 15.

1 O HAPPY day, that fixed my choice
On thee, my Saviour, and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.

2 O happy bond, that seals my vows
To him, who merits all my love!
Let cheerful anthems * fill his house,
While to that sacred shrine † I move.

3 'Tis done; the great transaction's done:
I am my Lord's, and he is mine:
He drew me, and I follow'd on,
Charm'd to confess the voice divine.

4 Now rest my long-divided heart,
Fix'd on this blissful centre rest;
With ashes who would grudge to part,
When called on angels, bread to feast?

5 High heaven that heard the solemn vow,
That vow renew'd shall daily hear;
Till in life's latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear.

XXIV. *God stirring up the Spirit of Cyrus to redeem Israel.* Ezra i. 1. compared with Isaiah xliv. 1—4.

1 TH' eternal God! his name how great!
How deep his counsels! how complete!
The hearts of kings his power can sway;
His word unconscious they obey.

2 Summon'd of old in distant days
To serve his schemes, and shew his praise,
Cyrus, illustrious prince, appears,
His people frees, his temple rears.

3 Through legions arm'd he breaks his way,
And tramples generals down like clay;

* Hymns of praise. † Altar, or place of worship.

The bars of steel he cuts in twain,
And brazen gates oppose in vain.

4 But to Jehovah's accents mild
The hero pliant as a child,
Lays the new cares of empire by,
Till Zion rise, and shines on high.

5 Thus, mighty God, shall every heart,
(If thou thine influence there exert)
Throw its own fondest schemes aside,
And follow where thy hand shall guide.

6 The foremost sons of fame shall boast
To raise thy temples from their dust;
Princes shall shout thy name aloud,
And new-born priests thine altars crowd.

XXV. *A Glance from God bringing us down to the Solitude of the Grave.* Job vii. 8.

1 SOVEREIGN of life, before thine eye,
Lo, mortal men by thousands die!
One glance from thee at once brings down
The proudest brow, that wears a crown.

2 Banish'd at once from human sight
To the dark grave's unchanging night,
Imprison'd in that dusty bed,
We hide our solitary head.

3 The friendly band no more shall greet,
Accents familiar once, and sweet:
No more the well-known features trace,
No more renew the fond embrace.

4 Yet if my Father's faithful hand
Conduct me through this gloomy land,
My soul with pleasure shall obey,
And follow, where he leads the way.

5 He nobler friends, than here I leave,
In brighter surer worlds can give;
Or by the beamings of his eye
A lost creation well supply.

XXVI. *The Impossibility of prospering while Men harden themselves against God.* Job ix. 4.

1 THE great Jehovah! who shall dare
With him to tempt unequal war?
What heart of steel shall dare t' oppose,
And league among his hardened foes?

2 At his command the lightnings dart,
And swift transfix the rebel heart:

Earth trembles at his look, and cleaves,
And legions sink in living graves.

3 Where are the haughty monarchs now,
Who scorn'd his word with lowring brow?
Where are the trophies of their reigns?
Or where their ruin's last remains?

4 See Pharaoh sinking in the tide!
See Babel's tyrant, mad with pride,
Graze with the beasts! Hear Herod roar,
While worms his deity devour!

5 See from the turrets of the skies,
Tall cherubs sink, no more to rise;
And trace their rank on thrones of light
By heavier chains, and darker night!

6 Great God! and shall this soul of mine
Presume to challenge wrath divine?
Trembling I seek thy mercy-seat,
And lay my weapons at thy feet.

XXVII. *The great Journey.* Job xvi. 22.

1 BEHOLD the path that mortals tread
Down to the regions of the dead!
Nor will the fleeting moments stay,
Nor can we measure back our way.

2 Our kindred and our friends are gone;
Know, O my soul, this doom they own;
Feeble as theirs my mortal frame,
The same my way, my house the same.

3 From vital air, from cheerful light,
To the cold grave's perpetual night,
From scenes of duty, means of grace,
Must I to God's tribunal pass!

4 Important journey? Awful view!
How great the change! the scenes how new!
The golden gates of heav'n display'd,
Or hell's fierce flames, and gloomy shade!

5 Awake my soul; thy way prepare,
And lose in this each mortal care,
With steady feet that path be trod,
Which through the grave conducts to God.

6 Jesus, to thee my all I trust,
And, if thou call me down to dust,
I know thy voice, I bless thy hand,
And die in smiles at thy command.

7 What was my terror, is my joy ;
These views my brightest hopes employ,
To go, ere many years are o'er,
Secure I shall return no more.

XXVIII. *The Penitent brought back from the Pit.* Job xxxiii. 27, 28.

1 THE Lord, from his exalted throne,
In majesty array'd,
Looks with a melting pity down
On all that seek his aid.

2 When, touched with penitent remorse,
Our follies past we mourn,
With what a tenderness of love
He meets our first return!

3 From heaven he sent his only Son
To ransom us with blood,
To snatch us from the burning pit,
When on its brink we stood.

4 From death and hell he leads us up
By a delightful way ;
And the bright beams of endless life
Doth round our path display.

5 Great God, we wonder, and adore ;
And, to exalt such grace,
We long to learn the songs of heaven
Ere yet we reach the place.

XXIX. *Communing with our Hearts.* Psalm. iv. 4.

1 RETURN, my roving heart, return,
And chase these shadowy forms no more ;
Seek out some solitude to mourn,
And thy forsaken God implore.

2 Wisdom and pleasure dwell at home ;
Retir'd and silent seek them there :
True conquest is ourselves t' o'ercome,
True strength to break the tempter's snare.

3 And thou, my God, whose piercing eye
Distinct surveys each deep recess,
In these abstracted hours draw nigh,
And with thy presence fill the place.

4 Through all the mazes * of my heart
My search let heavenly wisdom guide,
And still its radiant beams impart,
Till all be search'd, and purifi'd.

* Windings, perplexities.

5 Then, with the visits of thy love,
Vouchsafe my inmost soul to cheer;
Till every grace shall join to prove,
That God has fixed his dwelling there.

XXX. *God's Name, the Encouragement of our Faith.* Psalm ix. 10.

1 SING to the Lord, who loud proclaims
His various, and his saving names;
O may they not be heard alone,
But by our sure experience known!

2 Let great Jehovah be ador'd,
Th' eternal, all-sufficient Lord!
He through the world most high confess'd,
By whom 'twas form'd, and is possess'd.

3 Awake our noblest powers to bless
The God of Abram, God of peace;
Now by a dearer title known,
Father and God of Christ his Son.

4 Through every age his gracious ear
Is open to his servants' prayer;
Nor can one humble soul complain,
That it hath sought its God in vain.

5 What unbelieving heart shall dare
In whispers to suggest a fear,
While still he owns his ancient name?
The same his power, his love the same!

6 To thee our souls in faith arise,
To thee we lift expecting eyes;
And boldly through the desart tread;
For God will guard, where God shall lead.

XXXI. *Triumph in God's Protection.* Psalm xviii. 2.

1 LEGIONS of foes beset me round,
While marching o'er this dangerous ground;
Yet in Jehovah's aid I trust,
And in his power superior boast.

2 My buckler he; his shield is spread
To cover this defenceless head:
Now let the fiercest foes assail,
Their darts I count as rattling hail.

3 He is my rock, and he my tow'r;
The base * how firm! the walls how sure!
The battlements how high they rise!
And hide their summits † in the skies.

* Foundation. † Tops.

4 Deliverances to God belong ;
He is my strength, and he my song ;
The horn of my salvation he,
And all my foes dispers'd shall flee.

5 Through the long march my lips shall sing
My great Protector, and my King,
Till Zion's mount my feet ascend,
And all my painful warfare end.

6 Rais'd on the shining turrets there,
Through all the prospect wide and fair,
A land of peace his hosts survey,
And bless the grace, that led the way.

XXXII. *Support in Death.* Psalm xxiii. 4.

1 BEHOLD the gloomy vale,
Which thou, my soul, must tread,
Beset with terrors fierce and pale,
That leads thee to the dead.

2 Ye pleasing scenes, adieu*,
Which I so long have known :
My friends a long farewel to you,
For I must pass alone.

3 And thou, beloved clay,
Long partner of my cares,
In this rough path art torn away
With agony and tears.

4 But see a ray of light,
With splendors all divine,
Breaks through these doleful realms of night,
And makes its horrors shine.

5 Where death and darkness reigns,
Jehovah is my stay :
His rod my trembling feet sustains,
His staff defends my way.

6 Dear Shepherd, lead me on ;
My soul disdains to fear ;
Death's gloomy phantoms all are flown,
Now life's great Lord is near.

XXXIII. *The good Man's Prospect for Time and Eternity.* Psalm xxiii. 6.

1 MY soul, triumphant in the Lord,
Shall tell its joys abroad ;
And march with holy vigour on,
Supported by its God.

* Farewel.

2 Through all the winding * maze of life,
His hand hath been my guide,
And in that long-experienced care,
My heart shall still confide.

3 His grace through all the desart flows,
An unexhausted stream:
That grace on Zion's sacred mount
Shall be my endless theme †.

4 Beyond the choicest joys of earth
These distant courts I love;
But O! I burn with strong desire
To view thy house above.

5 Mingled with all the shining band,
My soul would there adore;
A pillar in thy temple fixed,
To be removed no more.

XXXIV. *The Goodness which God has wrought, and laid up for his People.* Psalm xxxi. 19.

1 OUR souls with pleasing wonder view
The bounties of thy grace;
How much bestowed! How much reserved
For them that seek thy face!

2 Thy liberal hand with worldly bliss
Oft makes their cup run o'er;
And in the covenant of thy love
They find diviner store.

3 Here mercy hides their numerous sins;
Here grace their souls renews;
Here thy own reconciled face
Doth heavenly beams diffuse.

4 But O! what treasures yet unknown
Are lodged in worlds to come!
If these th' enjoyments of the way,
How happy is their home!

5 And what shall mortal worms reply?
Or how such goodness own?
But 'tis our joy that, Lord, to thee,
Thy servants' hearts are known.

6 Thine eyes shall read those grateful thoughts
No language can express:
Yet, when our liveliest thanks we pay,
Our debts do most encrease.

* Wilderness. † Subject.

7 Since time's too short, all gracious God,
To utter half thy praise,
Loud to the honour of thy name
Eternal hymns we'll raise.

XXXV. *Relishing the divine Goodness.* Psalm xxxiv. 8, 9.

1 TRIUMPHANT, Lord, thy goodness reigns
Through all the wide celestial plains;
And its full streams redundant flow
Down to the abodes of men below.

2 Through nature's works its glories shine;
The cares of providence are thine:
And grace erects our ruined frame
A fairer temple to thy name.

3 O give to every human heart
To taste, and feel how good thou art:
With grateful love, and reverend fear,
To know, how blest thy children are.

4 Let nature burst into a song;
Ye echoing hills, the notes prolong:
Earth, seas, and stars your anthems raise,
All vocal * with your Maker's praise.

5 Ye saints, with joy the theme pursue,
Its sweetest notes belong to you;
Chose by this condescending King
For ever round his throne to sing.

XXXVI. *God saying to the Soul, that he is its Salvation.* Psalm xxxv. 3.

1 SALVATION! O melodious sound
To wretched dying men!
Salvation, that from God proceeds,
And leads to God again!

2 Rescued from hell's eternal gloom,
From fiends †, and fires, and chains:
Raised to a paradise of bliss,
Where love and glory reigns!

3 But O! may a degenerate soul,
Sinful and weak as mine,
Presume to raise a trembling eye
To blessings so divine?

4 The lustre of so bright a bliss
My feeble heart o'erbears;

* Sounding, as if endowed with speech. † Evil spirits.

And unbelief almost perverts
The promise into tears.

5 My Saviour-God, no voice but thine
These dying hopes can raise:
Speak thy salvation to my soul,
And turn its tears to praise.

6 My Saviour-God, this broken voice
Transported shall proclaim,
And call on all th' angelic harps
To sound so sweet a name.

XXXVII. *God's Complacency in the Prosperity of his Servants.* Psalm xxxv. 27.

1 THE Lord with pleasure views his saints,
And calls them all his own;
And low he bows to their complaints,
And pities every groan.

2 In all the joys they here possess,
He takes a tender part;
And, when they rise to heavenly bliss,
Complacence fills his heart.

3 My God, are all my pleasures thine?
My comforts thy delight?
O be thy happiness divine
Most precious in my sight!

4 They most in all thy bliss shall share,
Whose hearts can love thee most;
O could I vie in ardor here
With all th' angelic host.

XXXVIII. *The Days of the Upright known to God, and their everlasting Inheritance.* Psalm xxxvii. 18.

1 TO thee, my God, my days are known;
My soul enjoys the thought;
My actions all before thy face,
Nor are my faults forgot.

2 Each secret breath devotion vents,
Is vocal to thine ear;
And all my walks of daily life
Before thine eye appear.

3 The vacant hour, the active scene,
Thy mercy shall approve;
And every pang of sympathy,
And every care of love.

4 Each golden hour of beaming light
Is guided by thy rays;
And dark affliction's midnight gloom
A present God surveys.

5 Full in thy view through life I pass,
And in thy view I die;
And, when each mortal bond is broke,
Shall find my God is nigh.

6 Stripp'd of its little earthly all,
My soul in smiles shall go;
And in an heavenly heritage
Its father's bounty know.

XXXIX. *Our Desire and Groaning before God, when proceeding from the greatest Distress.* Psalm xxxviii. 9, 10.

1 MY soul, the awful hour will come,
Apace it passeth on,
To bear this body to the tomb,
And thee to scenes unknown.

2 My heart, long labouring with its woes,
Shall pant and sink away;
And you, my eye-lids, soon shall close
On the last glimmering ray.

3 Whence in that hour shall I receive
A cordial for my pain,
When, if earth's monarchs were my friends,
Those friends would weep in vain?

4 Great King of nature, and of grace,
To thee my spirit flies,
And opens all its deep distress
Before thy pitying eyes.

5 All its desires to thee are known,
And every secret fear,
The meaning of each broken groan
Well-noticed by thine ear.

6 O fix me by that mighty power,
Which to such love belongs,
Where darkness veils the eyes no more,
And groans are chang'd to songs.

XL. *God magnified by those that love his Salvation.* Psalm xl. 16.

1 GOD of salvation, we adore
Thy saving love, thy saving power;
And to our utmost stretch of thought
Hail the redemption thou hast wrought.

2 We love the stroke, that breaks our chain,
The sword, by which our sins are slain:
And, while abas'd in dust we bow,
We sing the grace, that lays us low.

3 Perish each thought of human pride,
Let God alone be magnifi'd:
His glory let the heavens resound,
Shouted from earth's remotest bound.

4 Saints, who his full salvation know,
Saints, who but taste it here below,
Join every angel's voice to raise
Continued, never-ending praise.

XLI. *The Triumph of Christ in the Cause of Truth, Meekness, and Righteousness.* Psalm xlv. 3, 4.

1 LOUD to the prince of heaven
Your cheerful voices raise;
To him your vows be given,
And fill his courts with praise:
With conscious worth
All clad in arms,
All bright in charms,
He sallies forth.

2 Gird on thy conquering sword,
Ascend thy shining car,
And march, Almighty Lord,
To wage thy holy war:
Before his wheels,
In glad surprise,
Ye vallies rise,
And sink, ye hills.

3 Fair truth, and smiling love,
And injur'd righteousness
In thy retinue move,
And seek from thee redress:
Thou in their cause
Shalt prosperous ride,
And far and wide
Dispense thy laws.

4 Before thine awful face
Millions of foes shall fall,
The captives of thy grace,
That grace, which conquers all:
The world shall know,
Great King of kings,
What wonderous things
Thine arm can do.

5 Here to my willing soul
Bend thy triumphant way;
Here every foe controul,
And all thy power display:
My heart, thy throne,
Blest Jesus, see,
Bows low to thee,
To thee alone.

XLII. *Quietness under Affliction, a proper Acknowledgment of God.* Psalm xlvi. 10.

1 PEACE, 'tis the Lord Jehovah's hand,
That blasts our joys in death;
Changes the visage once so dear,
And gathers back our breath.

2 'Tis he, the potentate supreme
Of all the worlds above,
Whose steady counsels wisely rule,
Nor from their purpose move.

3 'Tis he, whose justice might demand
Our souls a sacrifice;
Yet scatters with unwearied hand
A thousand rich supplies.

4 Our covenant-God and Father he
In Christ our bleeding Lord;
Whose grace can heal the bursting heart
With one reviving word.

5 Fair garlands of immortal bliss
He weaves for every brow;
And shall tumultuous passions rise,
If he correct us now?

6 Silent I own Jehovah's name;
I kiss thy scourging hand;
And yield my comforts, and my life
To thy supreme command.

XLIII. *The Year crowned with the divine Goodness.* Psalm lxv. 11.

FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 ETERNAL source of every joy!
Well may thy praise our lips employ,
While in thy temple we appear,
Whose goodness crowns the circling year.

2 While as the wheels of nature roll,
Thy hand supports the steady pole;
The sun is taught by thee to rise,
And darkness, when to veil the skies.

3 The flowery spring at thy command
Embalms the air, and paints the land ;
The summer rays with vigour shine
To raise the corn, and cheer the vine.

4 Thy hand in autumn richly pours
Through all our coasts redundant stores ;
And winters, softened by thy care,
No more a face of horror wear.

5 Seasons, and months, and weeks, and days
Demand successive songs of praise ;
Still be the cheerful homage paid
With opening light, and evening shade.

6 Here in thy house shall incense rise,
As circling sabbaths bless our eyes ;
Still will we make thy mercies known,
Around thy board, and round our own.

7 O may our more harmonious tongues
In worlds unknown pursue the songs ;
And in those brighter courts adore,
Where days and years revolve no more !

XLIV. *Rebels against the supreme Sovereign admonished.* Psalm lxvi. 7.

1 THE Lord of glory reigns supremely great,
And o'er heaven's arches builds his royal seat,
Through worlds unknown his sovereign sway extends,
Nor space nor time his boundless empire ends,
His eye beholds th' affairs of every nation,
And reads each thought through his immense creation.

2 Lightnings and storms his mighty word obey,
And planets roll, where he has marked their way ;
Unnumber'd cherubs veil'd before him stand,
At his first signal all their wings expand ;
His praise gives harmony to all their voices,
And every heart through the full choir * rejoices.

3 Rebellious mortals, cease your tumults vain,
Nor longer such unequal war maintain :
Let clay with fellow clay in combat strive,
But dread to brave the power, by which you live :
With contrite hearts fall prostrate and adore him,
For, if he frowns, ye perish all before him.

XLV. *God the Happiness of his People, and their Support in the extremest Distress.* Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.

1 MY God, whose all-pervading † eye
Views earth beneath, and heaven above,

* Company of singers. † All seeing.

Witness, if here, or there thou seest
An object of mine equal love.

2 Not the gay scenes, where mortal men
Pursue their bliss, and find their woe,
Detain my rising heart, which springs
The nobler joys of heaven to view.

3 Not all the fairest sons of light,
That lead the army round thy throne,
Can bound its flight ; it presseth on,
And seeks its rest in God alone.

4 Fix'd near th' immortal source of bliss,
Dauntless and joyous it surveys
Each form of horror and distress,
That earth, combin'd with hell, can raise.

5 This feeble flesh shall faint and die ;
This heart renew its pulse no more ;
Even now it views the moment nigh,
When life's last movements all are o'er.

6 But come, thou vanquish'd king of dread,
With thy own hand thy power destroy ;
'Tis thine to bear my soul to God,
My portion, and eternal joy.

XLVI. *The Rage of Enemies restrained, and over-ruled to the divine Glory.* Psalm lxxvi. 10.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE REBELLION, 1746.

1 ACCEPT, great God, thy Britain's songs,
While grateful joy unites our tongues
To own the work, thy hand hath done :
Thy hand hath crush'd our cruel foes,
When in rebellious troops they rose,
And swore to tread our glory down.

2 With hell confederate on their side,
People and prince their rage defy'd,
And in proud hope devour'd us all :
Thy hand its banner hath display'd,
Beckon'd its hero to our aid,
And in one day their legions fall.

3 Thus shalt thou still maintain thy throne,
And prove, that thou art God alone.
Though earth and hell new efforts try,
'Midst all the tumult they can raise,
Envenom'd wrath exalts thy praise,
Till hush'd at thy rebuke it die.

4 So swell the surges * of the sea,
And roar in their impetuous way,
As they would deluge earth again:
So strike they on th' unshaken rock,
Dash'd by the fierceness of their shock,
And foam to feel their fury vain.

XLVII. *God furnishing a Table in the Wilderness.* Psalm lxxviii. 19, 20.

1 PARENT of universal good,
We own thy bounteous hand,
Which does so rich a table spread
Even in this desart land.

2 Struck by thy power, the flinty rocks
In gushing torrents flow;
The feather'd wanderers of the air
Thy guiding instinct know.

3 The pregnant clouds, at thy command,
Rain down delicious bread;
And by light drops of pearly dew
Are numerous armies fed.

4 Supported thus, thine Israel march'd
The promis'd land to gain:
And shall thy children now begin
To seek their God in vain?

5 Are all thy stores exhausted now?
Or does thy mercy fail?
That faith should languish in our breasts,
And anxious cares prevail?

6 Ye base unworthy fears, be gone,
And wide disperse in air;
Then may I feel my father's rod,
When I suspect his care!

XLVIII. *God speaking Peace to his People.* Psalm lxxxv. 8.

1 UNITE, my roving thoughts, unite
In silence soft and sweet:
And thou, my soul, sit gently down
At thy great Sovereign's feet.

2 Jehovah's awful voice is heard,
Yet gladly I attend;
For lo! the everlasting God
Proclaims himself my friend.

3 Harmonious accents to my soul
The sounds of peace convey;

* Great waves.

The tempest at his word subsides,
And winds and seas obey.

4 By all its joys, I charge my heart,
To grieve his love no more;
But, charm'd by melody divine,
To give its follies o'er.

XLIX. *The Church, the Birth-Place of the Saints, and God's Care of it.* Psalm lxxxvii. 5.

ON OPENING A NEW PLACE OF WORSHIP.

1 AND will the great eternal God
On earth establish his abode?
And will he from his radiant throne
Avow our temples for his own?

2 We bring the tribute of our praise,
And sing that condescending grace,
Which to our notes will lend an ear,
And call us sinful mortals near.

3 Our Father's watchful care we bless,
Which guards our synagogues in peace,
That no tumultuous foes invade,
To fill our worshippers with dread.

4 These walls we to thy honour raise;
Long may they echo with thy praise;
And thou descending fill the place
With choicest tokens of thy grace!

5 Here let the great Redeemer reign
With all the graces of his train;
While power divine his word attends
To conquer foes, and cheer his friends!

6 And in the great decisive day,
When God the nations shall survey,
May it before the world appear,
That crowds were born to glory here!

L. *The Gospel Jubilee.* Psalm lxxxix. 15. *compared with* Levit. xxv. and Isaiah lxi. 2.

1 LOUD let the tuneful trumpet sound,
And spread the joyful tidings round;
Let every soul with transport hear,
And hail the Lord's accepted year!

2 Ye debtors, whom he gives to know,
That you ten thousand talents owe,
When humbled at his feet ye fall,
Your gracious Lord forgives them all.

3 Slaves, that have borne the heavy chain
Of sin and hell's tyrannic reign,
To liberty assert your claim,
And urge the great Redeemer's name.

4 The rich inheritance you lost,
Restor'd, improv'd, you now may boast,
Fair Salem your arrival waits,
To golden streets, and pearly gates.

5 Her blest inhabitants no more
Bondage and poverty deplore:
No debt, but love immensely great,
Whose joy still rises with the debt.

6 O happy souls that know the sound!
God's light shall all their steps surround;
And shew that Jubilee begun,
Which through eternal years shall run.

LI. *God the Dwelling-Place of his People through all Generations.*
Psalm xc. 1.

1 THOU, Lord, through every changing scene
Hast to thy saints a refuge been:
Through every age, eternal God,
Their pleasing home, their safe abode.

2 In thee our fathers sought their rest;
In thee our fathers still are blest;
And, while the tomb confines their dust,
In thee their souls abide, and trust.

3 Lo, we are risen, a feeble race,
A while to fill our father's place:
Our helpless state with pity view,
And let us share their refuge too.

4 Through all the thorny paths we trace
In this uncertain wilderness,
When friends desert, and foes invade,
Revive our heart, and guard our head.

5 So when this pilgrimage is o'er,
And we must dwell in flesh no more,
To thee our separate souls shall come,
And find in thee a surer home.

6 To thee our infant race we leave;
Them may their fathers' God receive;
That voices yet unform'd may raise
Succeeding hymns of humble praise.

LII. *Reflections on the Waste of Years.* Psalm xc. 9.
FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 REMARK, my soul, the narrow bounds
Of the revolving year!
How swift the weeks complete their rounds!
How short the months appear!

2 So fast eternity comes on,
And that important day,
When all, that mortal life has done,
God's judgment shall survey.

3 Yet like an idle tale we pass
The swift advancing year;
And study artful ways t' increase
The speed of its career.

4 Waken, O God, my trifling heart
Its great concern to see;
That I may act the christian part,
And give the year to thee.

5 So shall their course more grateful roll,
If future years arise;
Or this shall bear my smiling soul
To joy, that never dies.

LIII. *Joy and Prosperity from the Presence and Blessing of God.* Psalm xc. 17.

1 SHINE on our souls, eternal God,
With rays of beauty shine:
O let thy favour crown our days,
And all their round be thine!

2 Did we not raise our hands to thee,
Our hands might toil in vain;
Small joy success itself could give,
If thou thy love restrain.

3 With thee let every week begin,
With thee each day be spent,
For thee each fleeting hour improv'd,
Since each by thee is lent.

4 Thus cheer us through this desart road,
Till all our labours cease;
And heaven refresh our weary souls
With everlasting peace.

LIV. *The Mutability of the Creation, and the Immutability of God.* Psalm cii. 25—28.

1 GREAT former of this various frame,
Our souls adore thine awful name;

And bow and tremble, while they praise
The Ancient of eternal days.

2 Thou, Lord, with unsurpris'd survey,
Saw'st nature rising yesterday;
And, as to-morrow, shall thine eye
See earth and stars in ruin lie.

3 Beyond an angel's vision bright,
Thou dwell'st in self-existent light;
Which shines with undiminish'd ray,
While suns and worlds in smoke decay.

4 Our days a transient period run,
And change with every circling sun;
And in the firmest state we boast,
A moth can crush us into dust.

5 But let the creatures fall around;
Let death consign us to the ground;
Let the last general flame arise,
And melt the arches of the skies:

6 Calm as the summer's ocean, we
Can all the wreck * of nature see,
While grace secures us an abode,
Unshaken as the throne of God.

LV. *The Frailty of Human-nature, and God's gracious Regard to it.*
Psalm ciii. 14.

1 LORD, we adore thy wonderous name,
And make that name our trust,
Which rais'd at first this curious frame,
From mean and lifeless dust.

2 By dust supported, still it stands,
Wrought up to various forms,
Prepared by thy creating hands
To nourish mortal worms.

3 Awhile these frail machines endure,
The fabric of a day;
Then know their vital powers no more,
But moulder back to clay.

4 Yet, Lord, whate'er is felt or fear'd,
This thought is our repose,
That he, by whom this frame was rear'd,
Its various weakness knows.

5 Thou view'st us with a pitying eye,
While struggling with our load;

* Destruction.

In pains and dangers thou art nigh,
Our Father, and our God.

6 Gently supported by thy love,
We tend to realms of peace;
Where every pain shall far remove,
And every frailty cease.

LVI. *God adored for his Goodness, and his wonderful Works to the Children of Men.* Psalm cvii. 31.

1 YE sons of men, with joy record
The various wonders of the Lord;
And let his power and goodness sound
Through all your tribes the earth around.

2 Let the high heavens your songs invite,
Those spacious fields of brilliant light;
Where sun, and moon, and planets roll,
And stars, that glow from pole to pole.

3 Sing earth in verdant robes array'd,
Its herbs and flowers, its fruit and shade;
Peopled with life of various forms,
Fishes and fowls, and beasts and worms.

4 View the broad sea's majestic plains,
And think how wide its Maker reigns;
That band remotest nations joins,
And on each wave his goodness shines.

5 But O! that brighter world above,
Where lives and reigns incarnate love!
God's only Son in flesh array'd,
For man a bleeding victim * made.

6 Thither, my soul, with rapture soar;
There in the land of praise adore;
This theme demands an angel's lay †,
Demands an undeclining day.

LVII. *The holy Soul returning to its Rest in a grateful Sense of divine Bounties.* Psalm cxvi. 7.

1 RETURN, my soul, and seek thy rest
Upon thy heavenly Father's breast:
Indulge me, Lord, in that repose,
The soul which loves thee only knows.

2 Lodg'd in thine arms, I fear no more
The tempest's howl, the billow's roar:
Those storms must shake the Almighty's seat,
Which violate the saint's retreat.

* Sacrifice. † Song.

3 Thy bounties, Lord, to me surmount
The power of language to recount ;
From morning-dawn, the setting sun
Sees but my work of praise begun.

4 The mercies, all my moments bring,
Ask an eternity to sing ;
What thanks those mercies can suffice,
Which through eternity shall rise ?

5 Rich in ten thousand gifts possess'd,
In future hopes more richly bless'd,
I'll sit and sing, till death shall raise
A note of more proportion'd praise.

LVIII. *Deliverance celebrated.* Psalm cxvi. 8.

1 LOOK back, my soul, with grateful love,
On what thy God has done ;
Praise him for his unnumber'd gifts,
And praise him for his Son.

2 How oft hath his indulgent hand
My flowing eye-lids dried,
And rescu'd from impending death,
When I in danger cri'd !

3 When on the bed of death I lay,
With sickness sore oppress'd,
How oft hath he assuag'd my grief,
And lull'd my eyes to rest !

4 Back from destruction's yawning pit
At his command I came ;
He fed th' expiring lamp anew,
And rais'd its feeble flame.

5 My broken spirit he hath cheer'd,
When torn with inward grief ;
And, when temptations press'd me sore,
Hath brought me swift relief.

6 My soul from everlasting death
Is by his mercy brought,
To tell in Zion's sacred gates
The wonders he hath wrought.

7 Still will I walk before his face,
While he this life prolongs ;
Till grace shall all its work complete,
And teach me heavenly songs.

LIX. *Deliverance celebrated, and good Resolutions formed.* Psalm cxvi. 8, 9.

1 GREAT source of life, our souls confess
The various riches of thy grace;
Crown'd with thy mercy, we rejoice,
And in thy praise exalt our voice.

2 By thee heaven's shining arch was spread;
By thee were earth's foundations laid,
And all the charms of men's abode
Proclaim the wise, the gracious God.

3 Thy tender hand restores our breath,
When trembling on the verge of death;
Gently it wipes away our tears,
And lengthens life to future years.

4 These lives are sacred to the Lord;
Kindled by him, by him restor'd;
And, while our hours renew their race,
Still would we walk before his face.

5 So when by him our souls are led
Through unknown regions of the dead,
With joy triumphant shall they move
To seats of nobler life above.

LX. *Praise for Recovery from Sickness.* Psalm cxviii. 18, 19.

1 SOVEREIGN of life, I own thy hand
In every chastening stroke;
And, while I smart beneath thy rod,
Thy presence I invoke.

2 To thee in my distress I cried,
And thou hast bow'd thine ear;
Thy powerful word my life prolong'd,
And brought salvation near.

3 Unfold, ye gates of righteousness,
That, with the pious throng,
I may record my solemn vows,
And tune my grateful song.

4 Praise to the Lord, whose gentle hand
Renews our labouring breath:
Praise to the Lord, who makes his saints
Triumphant ev'n in death.

5 My God, in thine appointed hour
Those heavenly gates display,
Where pain and sin, and fear and death
For ever flee away.

6 There, while the nations of the bless'd
With raptures bow around,
My anthems to delivering grace
In sweeter strains shall sound.

LXI. *Regard to Scripture pressed upon young Persons, that they may cleanse their way.* Psalm cxix. 9.

1 INDULGENT God, with pitying eye,
The sons of men survey,
And see how youthful sinners sport
In a destructive way.

2 Ten thousand dangers lurk around
To bear them to the tomb;
Each in an hour may plunge them down,
Where hope can never come.

3 Reduce, O Lord, their wandering minds
Amus'd with airy dreams,
That heavenly wisdom may dispel,
Their visionary schemes.

4 With holy caution may they walk,
And be thy word their guide;
Till each, the desart safely pass'd,
On Zion's Hill abide.

LXII. *Desires of being quickened by the Word of God.* Psalm cxix. 25.

1 WITH pity, Lord, thy servant view,
As in the dust I lie,
Nor, while I raise my plaintive * voice,
Disdain the broken cry.

2 Fain would I mount on eagles' wings,
And view thy lovely face;
But cumberous burdens drag me down
From thine ador'd embrace.

3 Thy quickening energy diffuse
O'er all my inmost frame;
And animate these languid lips
To celebrate thy name.

4 Thy living word has wonders wrought;
Those wonders here renew;
And pour fresh vigour through my soul,
While I its glories view.

5 From thee, great ever flowing spring,
Let vital streams descend;

* Mournful.

And cheer me to begin those songs,
Which death shall never end.

LXIII. *Human Perfection no where to be found.* Psalm cxix. 96.

1 PERFECTION! 'Tis an empty name,
Nor can repay our cares,
And he, that seeks it here below,
Must end the search with tears.

2 Great David on his royal throne,
The beauteous, and the strong,
Rich in the spoils of conquered foes,
Amidst the applauding throng,

3 With all his mind's capacious powers,
Pursu'd the shade in vain;
Nor heard it his melodious voice,
Or harp's angelic strain.

4 From public to domestic scenes
Th' impatient monarch turns;
The friend, the husband, and the sire *
In sad succession mourns.

5 At length thy law, eternal God,
He through his tears descries †,
And, wrapt amidst those sacred folds,
He finds the heavenly prize.

6 There will I seek perfection too,
Where David's God is known;
Nor envy, with this volume blest,
His treasures and his throne.

LXIV. *Beholding Transgressors with Grief.* Psalm cxix. 136, 158.

1 ARISE, my tenderest thoughts, arise;
To torrents melt my streaming eyes;
And thou, my heart, with anguish feel
Those evils, which thou canst not heal.

2 See human nature sunk in shame;
See scandals pour'd on Jesus' name;
The Father wounded through the Son;
The world abused; the soul undone.

3 See the short course of vain delight
Closing in everlasting night;
In flames, that no abatement know,
Though briny tears for ever flow.

4 My God, I feel the mournful scene;
My bowels yearn o'er dying men;

* Father. † Discerns.

And fain my pity would reclaim,
And snatch the fire-brands from the flame.

5 But feeble my compassion proves,
And can but weep, where most it loves:
Thy own all-saving arm employ,
And turn these drops of grief to joy.

LXV. *The wandering Sheep recovered.* Psalm cxix. 176.

1 LORD, we have wander'd from the way;
Like foolish sheep, we've gone astray;
Our pleasant pastures we have left,
And of their guard our souls bereft *.

2 Expos'd to want, expos'd to harm;
Far from our gentle shepherd's arm;
Nor will these fatal wanderings cease,
Till thou reveal the paths of peace.

3 O seek thy thoughtless servants, Lord,
Nor let us quite forget thy word;
Our erring souls do thou restore,
And keep us, that we stray no more.

LXVI. *The weeping Seed-time, and joyful Harvest.* Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6.

1 THE darken'd sky, how thick it lowers!
Troubled with storms, and big with showers;
No cheerful gleam of light appears,
But nature pours forth all her tears.

2 Yet let the sons of grace revive;
God bids the soul, that seeks him, live;
And from the gloomiest shade of night.
Calls forth a morning of delight.

3 The seeds of ecstacy unknown,
Are in these water'd furrows sown;
See the green blades, how thick they rise,
And with fresh verdure bless our eyes.

4 In secret foldings they contain
Unnumber'd ears of golden grain;
And heaven shall pour its beams around,
Till the ripe harvest load the ground.

5 Then shall the trembling mourner come,
And find his sheaves, and bear them home:
The voice long broke with sighs shall sing,
Till heaven with hallelujahs ring.

* Deprived.

LXVII. *Thanks to God for his ever-enduring Goodness.* Psalm cxxxvi. 1.

FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 HOUSE of our God, with cheerful anthems ring,
While all our lips and hearts his graces sing!
The opening year his graces shall proclaim,
And all its days be vocal with his name.
The Lord is good, his mercy never-ending;
His blessings in perpetual showers descending.

2 The heaven of heavens he with his bounty fills:
Ye seraphs bright on ever blooming hills,
His honours sound; you to whom good alone,
Unmingled, ever-growing, has been known.
Through your immortal life, with love increasing,
Proclaim your Maker's goodness never-ceasing.

3 Thou earth, enlightened by his rays divine,
Pregnant with grass, and corn, and oil, and wine,
Crown'd with his goodness, let thy nations meet,
And lay their crowns at his paternal feet:
With grateful love that liberal hand confessing,
Which through each heart diffuseth every blessing.

4 Zion enrich'd with his distinguish'd grace,
Blest with the rays of thine Emanuel's face,
Zion, Jehovah's portion, and delight,
Graven on his hands, and hourly in his sight,
In sacred strains exalt that grace excelling,
Which makes thy humble hill his chosen dwelling.

5 His mercy never ends; the dawn, the shade
Still see new bounties through new scenes display'd:
Succeeding ages bless this sure abode,
And children lean upon their fathers, God.
The deathless soul, through its immense duration,
Drinks from this source immortal consolation.

6 Burst into praise, my soul; all nature join;
Angels and men in harmony combine!
While human years are measur'd by the sun,
And while eternity its course shall run,
His goodness, in perpetual showers descending,
Exalt in songs, and raptures never-ending!

LXVIII. *God strengthening the Souls of his praying People.* Psalm cxxxviii. 3.

1 MY soul, review the trembling days,
In which my God I sought;
I cry'd aloud for aid divine,
And aid divine he brought.

2 Through all my weak and fainting heart
His secret strength he spread,
And clasp'd me in his arms of love,
And rais'd my drooping head.

3 He call'd himself my covenant-God,
His promises he shew'd;
And wide display'd their solemn seal
In the great surety's blood.

4 I heard his people shout around,
And join'd their cheerful song;
And saw from far the shining seats,
Which to his saints belong.

5 My God, what inward strength thou giv'st
I to thy service vow;
And in thy strength would upward march,
Till at thy throne I bow.

LXIX. *Singing in the Ways of God.* Psalm cxxxviii. 5.

1 NOW let our voices join,
To form one pleasant song:
Ye pilgrims in Jehovah's ways,
With music pass along.

2 How straight the path appears!
How open, and how fair!
No lurking gins t' entrap our feet;
No fierce destroyer there.

3 But flowers of paradise
In rich profusion spring;
The sun of glory gilds the path,
And dear companions sing.

4 See Salem's golden spires
In beauteous prospect rise;
And brighter crowns than mortals wear,
Which sparkle through the skies.

5 All honour to his name,
Who drew the shining trace;
To him, who leads the wanderers on,
And cheers them with his grace.

6 Reduce the nations, Lord,
Teach all their kings thy ways,
That earth's full choir the notes may swell,
And heaven resound the praise.

LXX. *The innumerable Mercies of God thankfully acknowledged.*
Psalm cxxxix. 17, 18.

1 IN glad amazement, Lord, I stand,
Amidst the bounties of thy hand;
How numberless those bounties are!
How rich, how various, and how fair!

2 But O! what poor returns I make!
What lifeless thanks I pay thee back!
Lord, I confess with humble shame,
My offerings scarce deserve the name.

3 Fain would my labouring heart devise
To bring some nobler sacrifice;
It sinks beneath the mighty load:
What shall I render to my God?

4 To him I consecrate my praise,
And vow the remnant of my days;
Yet what at best can I pretend
Worthy such gifts from such a friend?

5 In deep abasement, Lord, I see
My emptiness and poverty:
Enrich my soul with grace divine,
And make it worthier to be thine.

6 Give me at length an angel's tongue,
That heaven may echo with my song;
The theme, too great for time, shall be
The joy of long eternity.

LXXI. *Praising God through the Whole of our Existence.*
Psalm cxlvi. 2.

1 GOD of my life, through all its days
My grateful powers shall sound thy praise;
The song shall wake with opening light,
And warble to the silent night.

2 When anxious cares would break my rest,
And griefs would tear my throbbing breast,
Thy tuneful praises rais'd on high
Shall check the murmur and the sigh.

3 When death o'er nature shall prevail,
And all its powers of language fail,
Joy through my swimming eyes shall break,
And mean the thanks I cannot speak.

4 But O! when that last conflict's o'er,
And I am chain'd to flesh no more,
With what glad accents shall I rise,
To join the music of the skies!

5 Soon shall I learn th' exalted strains,
Which echo o'er the heavenly plains;
And emulate, with joy unknown,
The glowing seraphs round thy throne.

6 The cheerful tribute will I give,
Long as a deathless soul can live;
A work so sweet, a theme so high,
Demands, and crowns eternity.

LXXII. *The Meek beautified with Salvation.* Psalm cxlix. 4.

1 YE humble souls rejoice,
And cheerful triumphs sing;
Wake all your harmony of voice,
For Jesus is your King.

2 That meek and lowly Lord,
Whom here your souls have known,
Pledges the honour of his word
T' avow you for his own.

3 He brings salvation near,
For which his blood was paid:
How beauteous shall your souls appear
Thus sumptuously array'd!

4 Sing, for the day is nigh,
When near your Leader's seat
The tallest sons of pride shall lie,
The footstool of your feet.

5 Salvation, Lord, is thine;
And all thy saints confess,
The royal robes, in which they shine,
Were wrought by sovereign grace.

LXXIII. *The Reproofs of Wisdom mingled with Promises, and Threatnings to reclaim wandering Sinners.* Proverbs i. 23.

1 HARK! for 'tis wisdom's voice,
That breaks in gentle sound:
Listen, ye sons of earth and sin,
And gather all around.

2 What though she speaks rebukes,
That pierce the soul with smart;
True love through all her chastenings runs,
By pain to mend the heart.

3 "Ye that have wander'd long
"In sin's destructive ways,
"Turn, turn," the heavenly charmer cries,
And seize the offer'd grace.

4 " I know your souls are weak,
" And mortal efforts vain
" To grapple with the prince of hell,
" And break his cursed chain.

5 " But I'll my spirit pour
" In torrents from above,
" To arm you with superior strength,
" And melt your hearts in love.

6 " Come, while these offers last,
" Ye sinners, and be wise:
" He lives, who hears this friendly call,
" But he that slights it, dies."

## LXXIV. *The Voice of Christ addressed to the Children of Men.*

Proverbs viii. 4.

1 NOW let the listening world around
In silent reverence hear;
While from on high the Saviour's voice
Thus strikes th' attentive ear.

2 " To you, O sons of men, I call,
" And from my lofty throne
" Reclin'd, in gentle pity bow
" To bring salvation down.

3 " Ye thoughtless sinners, hear my voice,
" Attend my words and live;
" My words conduct to solid joys,
" And endless blessings give.

4 " Each faithful minister is sent
" This message to proclaim;
" In every various providence
" The language is the same.

5 " And could the pale forgotten dead,
" Though deep in dust they lie,
" Arise in visionary crouds,
" They'd join the solemn cry.

6 " Forgetful mortals, yet be wise,
" While o'er the grave ye stand;
" Lest long-neglected love provoke
" The vengeance of my hand.

7 " In glad submission bow ye down,
" Nor steel that stubborn heart;
" Till mine inexorable voice
" Pronounce the word, Depart."

8 Blest Jesus, may thy Spirit breathe
On souls, which else must die;

For, till thy grace reflect the sound,
Thy word in vain will cry.

LXXV. *The Encouragement young Persons have to seek, and love Christ.* Prov. viii. 17.

1 YE hearts with youthful vigour warm,
In smiling crouds draw near,
And turn from every mortal charm,
A Saviour's voice to hear.

2 He, Lord of all the worlds on high,
Stoops to converse with you;
And lays his radiant glories by,
Your friendship to pursue.

3 "The soul, that longs to see my face,
"Is sure my love to gain;
"And those, that early seek my grace,
"Shall never seek in vain."

4 What object, Lord, my soul should move,
If once compar'd with thee?
What beauty should command my love,
Like what in Christ I see?

5 Away, ye false delusive toys,
Vain tempters of the mind!
'Tis here I fix my lasting choice,
And here true bliss I find.

LXXVI. *The House and Feast of Wisdom.* Prov. ix. 1 6.

1 SEE the fair structure wisdom rears,
Her messengers attend;
And charm'd by her persuasive voice,
To her your footsteps bend.

2 Hear me, ye simple ones, she cries,
"That lur'd by folly stray,
"And languish to eternal death
"In her detested way.

3 "Enter my hospitable gate,
"And all my banquet share;
"For heavenly wine surrounds my board,
"And angels' food is there.

4 "Freely of every dainty taste;
"Taste, and for ever live;
"And mingle with your joys the hopes
"Of all a god can give.

5 "But if seduc'd by folly's arts,
"Ye seek her poisonous food;

" Know, that the dreadful moment hastes,
" Which pays the feast with blood."

LXXVII. *The Excellency of the Righteous, with Regard to their Temper.* Prov. xii. 26. Part 1st.

1 HOW glorious, Lord, art thou !
How bright thy splendors shine !
Whose rays reflected gild thy saints
With ornaments divine.

2 With lowliness and love,
Wisdom and courage meet ;
The grateful heart, the cheerful eye,
How reverend and how sweet !

3 In beauties such as these,
Thy children now are drest ;
But brighter habits shall they wear
In regions of the blest.

4 In nature's barren soil,
Who could such glories raise ?
We own, O God, the work is thine,
And thine be all the praise !

LXXVIII. *The Excellency of the Righteous, with Regard to their Relations, Employments, Pleasures, and Hopes.* Prov. xii. 26. Part 2d.

1 O Israel, thou art blest ;
Who may with thee compare ?
Thine excellencies stand confess'd ;
How bright thy glories are !

2 O God of Israel, hear,
And make this bliss our own ;
Make us the children of thy care,
The members of thy Son.

3 Thus honour'd, thus employ'd,
By these great motives fir'd,
Be paradise on earth enjoy'd,
And brighter hopes inspir'd.

4 Thy people, Lord, we love ;
Their God our souls embrace ;
So may we find in worlds above
Among thy saints a place.

LXXIX. *Walking with God ; or being in his Fear all the Day long.* Proverbs xxiii. 17.

1 THRICE happy souls, who born from heaven,
While yet they sojourn here,
Thus all their days with God begin,
And spend them in his fear !

2 So may our eyes with holy zeal
Prevent the dawning day;
And turn the sacred pages* o'er,
And praise thy name and pray.

3 'Midst hourly cares, may love present
Its incense to thy throne;
And, while the world our hands employs,
Our hearts be thine alone!

4 As sanctifi'd to noblest ends
Be each refreshment sought;
And by each various providence
Some wise instruction brought!

5 When to laborious duties call'd,
Or by temptations try'd,
We'll seek the shelter of thy wings,
And in thy strength confide.

6 As different scenes of life arise,
Our grateful hearts would be
With thee, amidst the social band;
In solitude, with thee.

7 At night we lean our weary heads
On thy paternal breast;
And, safely folded in thine arms,
Resign our powers to rest.

8 In solid pure delights, like these,
Let all my days be past;
Nor shall I then impatient wish,
Nor shall I fear the last.

LXXX. *The obstinate Sinner alarmed.* Proverbs xxix. 1.

1 NOW let the sons of Belial † hear
The thunders of the Lord;
Unfold their long rebellious ear,
And tremble at his word.

2 Now let the iron sinew bow,
And take his easy yoke;
Lest sudden vengeance lay it low
By one resistless stroke.

3 Though yet the great physician wait,
And healing balm be found,
One hour may seal their endless fate,
And fix a deadly wound.

* The holy scriptures. † Disobedient rebellious persons.

4 Swift may thy mercy, Lord, arise,
Ere justice stop their breath;
And lighten those deluded eyes,
That sleep the sleep of death!

LXXXI. *God's reasonable Expectations from his Vineyard.* Isaiah v. 1—7.

1 THE vineyard of the Lord, how fair!
Planted by his peculiar care,
Behold its branches spread, and fill
The borders of his sacred hill.

2 His eye hath mark'd the chosen ground;
His mighty hand hath fenc'd it round;
His servants by his order wait,
To watch and aid its tender state

3 But when the vintage he demands
For all the labour of their hands,
What clusters doth his vine produce?
The grapes are wild, and sour the juice.

4 Well might he tear its fence away,
And leave it to the beasts of prey,
Might give it to the wild again,
And charge his clouds to cease to rain.

5 But spare our land, our churches spare,
Thy vengeance long provok'd forbear;
Let the true vine its influence give,
And bid our withering branches live!

LXXXII. *Isaiah's Obedience to the heavenly Vision.* Isaiah vi. 8.

1 OUR God ascends his lofty throne,
Array'd in majesty unknown;
His lustre all the temple fills,
And spreads o'er all th' ethereal * hills.

2 The holy, holy, holy Lord,
By all the Seraphim ador'd,
And, while they stand beneath his seat,
They veil their faces, and their feet.

3 And can a sinful worm endure
The presence of a God so pure?
Or these polluted lips proclaim
The honours of so grand a name?

4 O for thine altar's glowing coal
To touch my lips, to fire my soul,
To purge the sordid dross away,
And into crystal turn my clay!

* Heavenly.

5 Then, if a messenger thou ask,
A labourer for the hardest task,
Through all my weakness and my fear,
Love shall reply, "Thy servant's here."

6 Nor should my willing soul complain,
Though all its efforts seem'd in vain;
It ample recompence shall be,
But to have wrought, my God, for thee.

LXXXIII. *The Stupidity of Israel, and of Britain lamented.*
Isaiah vi. 9—12.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 LORD, when thine Israel we survey,
We in their crimes discern our own;
And, if thou turn our prayer away,
Our misery must, like theirs, be known.

2 To us thy prophets have been sent
With words of terror and of love;
But not the vengeance, nor the grace
Ten thousand stubborn hearts will move.

3 Our eyes are blind, and deaf our ears;
Our hearts are harden'd into stone;
As we would bar thy mercy out,
And leave a way for wrath alone.

4 Justly our God might give us up
To plague and famine and the sword;
Till towns and cities rich and fair
Lay desolate without a Lord.

5 O'er bleeding wounds of slaughter'd friends
Rivers of helpless grief might flow,
Till the fierce conquerors' haughty rage
Dragg'd us to chains and slaughter too.

6 But spare a nation long thy own,
And shew new miracles of grace;
'Tis thine to heal the deaf and blind,
And wake the dead to life and praise.

LXXXIV. *Confederate Nations defied by those who sanctify God.*
Isaiah viii. 9—14.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 GREAT God of hosts, attend our prayer,
And make the British Isles thy care:
To thee we raise our suppliant cries,
When angry nations round us rise.

2 Fain would they tread our glory down,
And in the dust defile our crown,
Deluge our houses with our blood,
And burn the temples of our God.

3 But, 'midst the thunder of their rage,
We thy protection would engage:
O raise thy saving arm on high,
And bring renew'd deliverance nigh.

4 May Britain, as one man, be led
To make the Lord her fear and dread;
Our souls no other fear shall know,
Though earth were leagu'd with hell below.

5 Give ear, ye countries from afar;
Ye proud associate nations, hear;
While fix'd on him, who rules the sky,
Our hearts your threatened war defy.

6 Ye people, gird yourselves in vain,
Your scatter'd force unite again;
Again shall all that force be broke,
When God with us shall deal the stroke.

7 Now he records our humble tears,
With ardent vows of future years,
And destines for approaching days
Victorious shouts, and songs of praise.

8 Emanuel's land shall safe remain,
Blest with its Saviour's gentle reign;
'Till every hostile rumour cease
In the fair realms of perfect peace.

LXXXV. *Christ the Steward of God's Family.* Isaiah xxii. 22—24. compared with Rev. iii. 7.

1 WITH what delight I raise my eyes,
And view the courts, where Jesus dwells!
Jesus, who reigns beyond the skies,
And here below his grace reveals!

2 Of David's royal house the key
Is borne by that Majestic hand;
Mansions and treasures there I see,
Subjected all to his command.

3 He shuts, and worlds might strive in vain
The mighty obstacle to move;
He looses all their bars again,
And who shall shut the gates of love?

4 Fix'd in omnipotence he bears
The glories of his Father's name;

Sustains his people's weighty cares,
Through every changing age the same.

5 My little all I there suspend,
Where the whole weight of heaven is hung;
Secure I rest on such a friend,
And into rapture wake my tongue.

LXXXVI. *The rich Provision and happy Effects of the Gospel.*
Isaiah xxv. 6—9.

1 BEHOLD our God, he owns his name;
Jehovah all our songs proclaim
With shouts of wonder and of joy:
Long have we waited for his grace,
No longer now his love delays
For Zion his own arm t' employ.

2 We charge our souls the joy to feel;
We charge our tongues his praise to tell:
Th' Almighty Saviour! This is he!
He pours his streams of grace abroad,
Till all the earth confess the God,
And lands remote his glory see.

3 Dainties how rich his stores afford!
How pure the wine, that crowns his board,
While welcome nations flock around!
He takes the veil of grief away;
Through thickest shades he darts the day,
And not one weeping eye is found.

4 All-conquering death, no longer boast
O'er millions humbled in the dust;
Our God with scorn thy triumph sees:
Soon as he aims one shaft * at thee,
Swallow'd and lost in victory,
Thine empire and thy name shall cease.

LXXXVII. *The peaceful State of the Soul, that trusteth in God.*
Isaiah xxvi. 3.

1 WEARY and weak and faint,
I cast mine eyes around;
My joints all tremble, and my feet
Sink deep in miry ground.

2 Despairing help below,
To heaven I raise my cries;
God hears, and his Almighty arm
Out-stretches from the skies.

3 I on that arm repose,
And all my fears are o'er;

* Arrow.

New strength diffus'd through all my soul
Attests its vital power.

4 My mind in perfect peace
Thy guardian care shall keep :
I'll yield to gentle slumbers now,
For thou canst never sleep.

5 Happy the souls alone
On thee securely stay'd !
Nor shall they be in life alarm'd,
Nor be in death dismay'd.

LXXXVIII. *Israel's Obstinacy under God's lifted Hand.* Isaiah xxvi. 11.

1 LORD, when thy hand is lifted up,
The wicked will not see ;
But they shall see with glowing shame,
Though they obdurate be.

2 How few the weighty stroke regard,
And seek their Maker's face !
In vain may providence correct,
If not enforc'd by grace.

3 Exert thy mighty influence, Lord,
And melt the stony breast ;
Then shall thy justice be ador'd,
Thy mercy stand confess'd.

4 The scorner then shall mourn in dust,
And put his sins away,
No more resist his Maker's hands,
But lift his own to pray.

LXXXIX. *God quickening the Dead.* Isaiah xxvi. 19.

1 THE ever-living God
Th' expiring church shall raise ;
Our hearts his promises receive,
And wake a shout of praise.

2 Death shall not always reign,
Where grace hath fix'd its throne ;
His soft compassion views the dust,
He once hath call'd his own.

3 " Yes," saith the God of truth,
" My dead shall live again ;
" The foe shall see their leader's breath
" Reanimate the slain.

4 " The dew of heaven shall fall
" In rich abundance round,

" And a redundant harvest rise
" To cloath the teeming ground.

5 " Now from your dust awake,
" And burst into a song;
" Then spurn the earth, and mount the skies
" In a triumphant throng."

6 Thy Zion, Lord, believes
A promise so divine,
And looks through all her flowing tears
To see the glory shine.

XC. *The godly Man's Ark.* Isaiah xxvi. 20.

1 IT is my Father's voice;
And O! how sweet the sound!
It makes my inmost powers rejoice,
My trembling heart rebound.

2 " Mark, the black tempest lowrs,
" And gathers round the sky;
" Retire and shun the sweeping showers
" Of indignation nigh.

3 " Come, my dear children, come,
" And seek your Father's arms;
" There is your shelter, there your home;
" 'Midst all these dire alarms.

4 " Enter at his command;
" Close in your ark remain;
" And wait the signal of his hand
" To call you forth again.

5 " The moments to beguile,
" A cheerful song begin;
" Nor let the roaring thunders spoil
" The harmony within.

6 " Ere long the sky shall clear,
" The clouds be chas'd away,
" And grace shall shine in radiance fair
" Through an eternal day."

XCI. *Laying hold on God's Strength, that we may be at Peace with him.* Isaiah xxvii. 5.

1 THUS saith Jehovah from his seat,
" Who shall presume my wrath to meet?
" What rebel men or angels dare
" To wage with me unequal war?

2 " Close let the thorns and briars stand,
" In thick array on either hand;

" Forth shall my flaming terrors fly ;
" At once they kindle, blaze, and die.

3 " Presumptuous sinners, yet be wise
" Ere this o'erwhelming ruin rise ;
" Your vain tumultuous efforts cease,
" And seek in suppliant crowds for peace."

4 Great God, we bless the gentle sound,
And bow submissive to the ground ;
Thy prostrate foes let pity raise,
And form a people to thy praise !

5 His thundering storms are silent now ;
Calm are the terrors of his brow,
Since Jesus makes the Father known,
Our guardian shield, our cheering sun.

XCII. *The divine Goodness in moderating Afflictions.* Isaiah xxvii. 8.

1 GREAT ruler of all nature's frame,
We own thy power divine.
We hear thy breath in every storm,
For all the winds are thine.

2 Wide as they sweep their sounding way,
They work thy sovereign will ;
And aw'd by thy majestic voice
Confusion shall be still.

3 Thy mercy tempers every blast
To them that seek thy face ;
And mingles with the tempest's roar
The whispers of thy grace.

4 Those gentle whispers let me hear,
Till all the tumult cease ;
And gales of paradise shall lull
My weary soul to peace.

XCIII. *God waiting to be gracious.* Isaiah xxx. 18.

1 WAIT on the Lord, ye heirs of hope,
And let his word support your souls :
Well can he bear your courage up,
And all your foes and fears controul.

2 He waits his own well-chosen hour
Th' intended mercy to display ;
And his paternal bowels move,
While wisdom dictates the delay.

3 With mingled majesty and love
At length he rises from his throne ;

And, while salvation he commands,
He makes his people's joy his own.

4 Blest are the humble souls, that wait
With sweet submission to his will;
Harmonious all their passions move,
And in the midst of storms are still.

5 Still, till their Father's well-known voice,
Wakens their silence into songs;
Then earth grows vocal with his praise,
And heaven the grateful shout prolongs.

XCIV. *The different Views of good and bad Men in Times of public Danger.* Isaiah xxxiii. 14—17.

1 SEE! the destruction is begun,
And heaps of ruin spread the ground;
With hasty strides it marches on,
And scatters consternation round.

2 Sinners in Zion take th' alarm,
The hypocrites astonish'd cry,
Who with devouring flames can dwell?
Who in eternal burnings lie?

3 God's gracious voice the saint revives;
How sweet the heavenly accents sound!
"Dwell thou on high, my child," he says,
"Where rocks shall guard thee all around.

4 "There shall my hand thy wants supply,
"Thy water and thy bread are sure;
"There shall my visits make thee glad,
"While these alarming scenes endure.

5 "Then, led in joyous triumph forth,
"Thine eyes the distant land shall view;
"Shall see thy King in beauty drest,
"And share his royal honours too."

6 My soul the oracle receives,
And feels its energy to cheer:
A promis'd heaven, a present God
Forbids my grief, forbids my fear.

XCV. *God the Defence of his People from invading Enemies.* Isaiah xxxiii. 21—23.

1 THE glorious Lord! his Israel's hope!
How well he bears their courage up!
How wide his saving power extends!

His princely titles will we sing,
Our judge, our law-giver, our king,
He guards his subjects as his friends.

2 Around the mountain where they dwell,
Lo, at his word, new waters swell
To deluge the invading foe!
Open'd by him that rules the skies,
Mark the broad rivers how they rise,
And with what rapid strength they flow!

3 To gain the well-defended shores,
In vain the gally spreads its oars,
And the proud ship her sails displays:
The sails are rent, the masts are broke,
The shatter'd oars all drop their stroke,
And lightnings through the tacklings blaze.

4 Shout your hosannas to the Lord!
Thus shall he still his Zion guard,
Till the last foe be trampled down:
High as the heavens exalt his praise!
High as the heavens his hand shall raise
The soul, that here his grace hath known.

XCVI. *The High-Way to Zion.* Isaiah xxxv. 8, 9, 10.

1 SING, ye redeemed of the Lord,
Your great deliverer sing:
Pilgrims for Zion's city bound,
Be joyful in your king.

2 See the fair way his hand hath rais'd;
How holy, and how plain!
Nor shall the simplest travellers err,
Nor ask the track in vain.

3 No ravening lion shall destroy,
Nor lurking serpent wound;
Pleasure and safety, peace and praise,
Through all the path are found.

4 A hand divine shall lead you on
Through all the blissful road;
Till to the sacred mount you rise,
And see your smiling God.

5 There garlands of immortal joy
Shall bloom on every head;
While sorrow, sighing, and distress,
Like shadows all are fled.

6 March on in your Redeemer's strength;
Pursue his footsteps still;

And let the prospect cheer your eye,
While labouring up the hill.

XCVII. *The Greatness and Majesty of God, and the Meanness of the Creatures.* Isaiah xl. 15, 16, 17.

1 YE weak inhabitants of clay,
Ye trifling insects of a day,
Low in your native dust bow down
Before th' eternal's awful throne.

2 With trembling heart, with solemn eye,
Behold Jehovah seated high!
And search, what worthy sacrifice
Your hands can give, your thoughts devise.

3 Let Lebanon her cedars bring,
To blaze before the sovereign King;
And all the beasts, that on it feed,
As victims at his altar bleed.

4 Loud let ten thousand trumpets sound,
And call remotest nations round,
Assembled on the crowded plains,
Princes and people, kings and swains.

5 Join'd with the living, let the dead
Rising, the face of earth o'erspread;
And, while his praise unites their tongues,
Let angels echo back the songs.

6 The drop, that from the bucket falls,
The dust, that hangs upon the scales,
Is more to sky, and earth, and sea,
Than all this pomp, O God, to thee.

XCVIII. *The timorous Saint encouraged by the Assurance of the divine Presence and Help.* Isaiah xli. 10.

1 AND art thou with us, gracious Lord,
To dissipate our fear?
Dost thou proclaim thyself our God,
Our God for ever near?

2 Doth thy right-hand, which form'd the earth,
And bears up all the skies,
Stretch from on high its friendly aid,
When dangers round us rise?

3 Dost thou a Father's bowels feel
For all thy humble saints?
And in such tender accents speak
To soothe their sad complaints?

4 On this support my soul shall lean,
And banish every care;
The gloomy vale of death must smile,
If God be with me there.

5 While I his gracious succour prove
'Midst all my various ways,
The darkest shades, through which I pass,
Shall echo with his praise.

XCIX. *The Humiliation and Exaltation of God's Israel.* Isaiah xli. 14, 15.

1 AMAZING grace of God on high!
And will the Lord look down
On sinners, while in dust they lie,
And dread his awful frown?

2 Weaker than worms, O Lord, are we,
And viler far than they;
Yet in these reptiles* weak and vile
Dost thou thy power display.

3 Jehovah's sovereign voice is heard,
The worm lifts up its head,
And mountains, that would crush it down,
Before the worm are fled.

4 Thou holy one, thine Israel's king,
Thou our Redeemer art;
Nor shall the blessings of thy hand
From thy redeem'd depart.

5 Thy love shall its own work fulfil,
And grace shall rise on grace,
Till worms of earth around thy throne
With angels find a place.

C. *The Wilderness transformed, or the happy Effects of the Gospel.* Isaiah xli. 18, 19. compared with xxxv. 1, 2. xi. 6—9. lv. 13, &c.

1 AMAZING beauteous change:
A world created new!
My thoughts with transport range
The lovely scene to view;
In all I trace,
Saviour divine,
The work is thine,
Be thine the praise!

2 See crystal fountains play
Amidst the burning sands;

* Creeping things.

The river's winding way
Shines through the thirsty lands:
New grass is seen,
And o'er the meads
Its carpet spreads
Of living green.

3 Where pointed brambles grew,
Entwin'd with horrid thorn,
Gay flowers for ever new
The painted fields adorn;
The blushing rose,
And lily there,
In union fair
Their sweets disclose.

4 Where the bleak mountain stood,
All bare and disarray'd,
See the wide-branching wood
Diffuse its grateful shade;
Tall cedars nod,
And oaks and pines,
And elms and vines
Confess the God.

5 The tyrants of the plain
Their savage chase give o'er;
No more they rend the slain,
And thirst for blood no more:
But infant hands
Fierce tigers stroke,
And lions yoke
In flowery bands.

6 O when, Almighty Lord,
Shall these glad scenes arise
To verify thy word,
And bless our wondering eyes?
That earth may raise,
With all its tongues,
United songs
Of ardent praise.

CI. *The Blind and Weak led and supported in God's Way.*
Isaiah xlii. 16.

1 PRAISE to the radiant source of bliss,
Who gives the blind their sight,
And scatters round their wondering eyes
A flood of sacred light!

2 In paths unknown he leads them on
To his divine abode,

And shews new miracles of grace,
Through all the heavenly road.

3 The ways all rugged and perplex'd,
He renders smooth and straight,
And strengthens every feeble knee
To march to Zion's gate.

4 Through all the path I'll sing his name,
Till I the mount ascend,
Where toils and storms are known no more,
And anthems never end.

CII. *God calling his Israel by Name, and leading them through Water and Fire.* Isaiah xliii. 1, 2.

1 LET Jacob to his Maker sing,
And praise his great redeeming king;
Call'd by a new, a gracious name,
Let Israel loud his God proclaim!

2 He knows our souls in all their fears,
And gently wipes our falling tears;
Forms trembling voices to a song,
And bids the feeble heart be strong.

3 Then let the rivers swell around,
And rising floods o'erflow the ground;
Rivers and floods and seas divide,
And homage pay to Israel's guide.

4 Then let the fires their rage display,
And flaming terrors bar the way;
Unburnt, unsing'd, he leads them through,
And makes the flames refreshing too.

5 The fires but on their bonds shall prey *,
The floods but wash their stains away,
And grace divine new trophies † raise
Amidst the deluge, and the blaze.

CIII. *The Riches of pardoning Grace celebrated.* Isaiah xliv. 22, 23.

1 LET heaven burst forth into a song;
Let earth reflect the joyful sound;
Ye mountains, with the echo ring,
And shout, ye forests all around!

2 The Lord his Israel hath redeem'd,
Hath made his mourning people glad,
And the rich glories of his name
In their salvation hath display'd.

* Allusion to the story in Dan. iii. 19, &c. † Monuments of victory.

3 Unnumber'd sins, like sable clouds,
Veil'd every cheerful ray of joy,
And thunders murmur'd through the gloom,
While lightnings pointed to destroy.

4 He spake, and all the clouds dispers'd,
And heaven unveil'd its shining face;
The whole creation smil'd anew,
Deck'd in the golden beams of grace.

5 Israel, return with humble love,
Return to thy Redeemer's breast,
And charm'd by his melodious voice,
Compose thy weary powers to rest.

CIV. *The little Success which attended the personal Ministry of Christ.*
Isaiah xlix. 4.

1 AND doth the Son of God complain,
"Lo, I have spent my strength in vain,
"And stretch'd my hands whole days and years
"To those, who slight my words and tears?"

2 O stubborn hearts, that could withstand
Such efforts from a Saviour's hand!
O gracious Saviour, who wouldst bleed,
When words and tears could not succeed!

3 Fall down, my soul, in humble woe,
That thou hast wrong'd his goodness so:
Now let his grace resistless move
To melt the stubborn flint to love!

4 All-glorious Lord, march forth and reign,
And reap the fruit of all thy pain;
And, till a nobler scene appear,
Begin the happy conquest here.

CV. *God's Captives released; applied to spiritual Deliverances.*
Isaiah li. 14, 15.

1 *CAPTIVES of Israel, hear,
Who now as exiles * mourn;
See your Almighty God appear
To hasten your return.

2 Jehovah is his name,
Lord of celestial hosts:
Let heaven that saving power proclaim
In which his Israel trusts.

3 Though helpless now ye lie,
As in a dungeon thrown,
When parch'd with painful thirst ye cry,
And when your bread is gone,

* Banished persons.

4 Deliverance comes apace;
Ye shall not there expire;
Prepare to sing redeeming grace
With his triumphant choir.

5 He smote the raging sea
'Midst its tumultuous roar,
And pav'd his chosen troops a way
Safe to its distant shore.

6 In him let Israel hope,
At whose supreme command
Graves yield their breathless captives up,
And seas become dry land.

VI. *The Cup of Fury exchanged for the Cup of Blessings.* Isaiah li. 22.

1 THE Lord, our Lord, how rich his grace!
What stores of Sovereign love
For humble souls, that seek his face,
And to his footstool move!

2 He pleads the cause of all his saints,
When foes against them rise;
He listens to their sad complaints,
And wipes their streaming eyes.

3 He takes away that dreadful cup
Of fury and of plagues,
Which justice sentenc'd them to drink,
And wring the bitter dregs.

4 He gave it to their Saviour's hand,
And fill'd it to the brim;
Their Saviour drank the liquid death,
That they might live by him.

5 "Now take the cup of life, he cries,
"Where heavenly blessings flow:
"Drink deep, nor fear to drain the spring
"To which the draught ye owe."

6 We drink, and feel our life renew'd,
And all our woes forget:
We drink, till that transporting hour,
When we our Lord shall meet.

CVII. *The holy City purified and guarded.* Isaiah lii. 1, 2.

1 TRIUMPHANT Zion, lift thy head
From dust, and darkness, and the dead,
Though humbled long, awake at length,
And gird thee with thy Saviour's strength.

2 Put all thy beauteous garments on,
And let thy various charms be known;

The world thy glories shall confess,
Deck'd in the robes of righteousness.

3 No more shall foes unclean invade,
And fill thy hallow'd walls with dread;
No more shall hell's insulting host
Their victory, and thy sorrows boast.

4 God from on high thy groans will hear;
His hand thy ruins shall repair;
Rear'd and adorn'd by love divine,
Thy towers and battlements shall shine.

5 Grace shall dispose my heart and voice
To share, and echo back her joys;
Nor will her watchful monarch cease
To guard her in eternal peace.

CVIII. *God's Government, Zion's Joy.* Isaiah lii. 7.

1 YE subjects of the Lord, proclaim
The royal honours of his name;
Jehovah reigns, be all your song:
'Tis he, thy God, O Zion, reigns,
Prepare thy most harmonious strains
Glad hallelujahs to prolong!

2 Ye princes, boast no more your crowns,
But lay the glittering trifles down
In lowly honour at his feet;
A span your narrow empire bounds,
He reigns beyond created rounds,
In self-sufficient glory great.

3 Tremble, ye pageants of a day,
Form'd like your slaves of brittle clay,
Down to the dust your sceptres bend!
To everlasting years he reigns,
And undiminish'd pomp maintains,
When kings, and suns, and time shall end.

4 So shall his favour'd Zion live;
In vain, confederate nations strive
Her sacred turrets to destroy:
Her Sovereign sits enthron'd above,
And endless power, and endless love
Ensure her safety, and her joy.

CIX. *Divine Mercies and Judgments compared.* Isaiah liv. 7, 8.

IN thy rebukes, all-gracious God,
What soft compassion reigns!

What gentle accents of thy voice
Assuage thy children's pains!

2 "When I correct my chosen sons,
"A father's bowels move:
"One transient moment bounds my wrath,
"But endless is my love."

3 Our faith shall look through every tear,
And view thy smiling face,
And hope amidst our sighs shall tune
An anthem to thy grace.

4 Gather at length my weary soul
To join thy saints above;
For I would learn a song of praise,
Eternal as thy love.

CX. *Divine Teachings, and their happy Consequences.* Isaiah liv. 13.

1 BRIGHT source of intellectual rays,
Father of spirits, and of grace,
O dart with energy unknown
Celestial beamings from thy throne!

2 Thy sacred book we would survey,
Enlighten'd with that heavenly day,
And ask thy spirit, with the word,
To teach our souls to know the Lord.

3 So shall our children learn the road,
That leads them to their Father's God;
And, form'd by lessons so divine,
Shall infant minds with knowledge shine.

4 So shall the haughtiest soul submit,
With children plac'd at Jesus' feet:
The noisy swell of pride shall cease,
And thy sweet voice be heard in peace.

CXI. *Fruitful Showers, Emblems of the salutary Effects of the Gospel.* Isaiah lv. 10, 11, 12.

1 MARK the soft-falling snow,
And the diffusive rain;
To heaven, from whence it fell,
It turns not back again;
But waters earth
Through every pore,
And calls forth all
Its secret store.

2 Array'd in beauteous green
The hills and vallies shine,
And man and beast is fed
By providence divine;

The harvest bows
Its golden ears,
The copious seed
Of future years.

3 " So," saith the God of grace,
" My gospel shall descend,
" Almighty to effect
" The purpose I intend ;
" Millions of souls
" Shall feel its power,
" And bear it down
" To millions more.

4 " Joy shall begin your march,
" And peace protect your ways,
" While all the mountains round
" Echo melodious praise ;
" The vocal groves
" Shall sing the God,
" And every tree
" Consenting nod."

CXII. *Comfort for pious Parents, who have been bereaved of their Children.* Isaiah lvi. 4, 5.

1 YE mourning saints, whose streaming tear,
Flow o'er your children dead ;
Say not in transports of despair,
That all your hopes are fled.

2 While cleaving to that darling dust,
In fond distress ye lie,
Rise, and with joy and reverence view
A heavenly parent nigh.

3 Though, your young branches torn away,
Like wither'd trunks ye stand ;
With fairer verdure shall ye bloom,
Touch'd by th' Almighty's hand.

4 " I'll give the mourner," saith the Lord,
" In my own house a place ;
" No names of daughters and of sons
" Could yield so high a grace.

5 " Transient and vain is every hope
" A rising race can give ;
" In endless honour and delight
" My children all shall live."

6 We welcome, Lord, those rising tears,
Through which thy face we see,
And bless those wounds, which through our hearts
Prepare a way for thee.

CXIII. *The Stranger entertained in God's House of Prayer.* Isaiah lvi. 6, 7. compared with Mat. xxi. 13. and Eph. ii. 19.

1 GREAT Father of mankind,
We bless that wondrous grace,
Which could for Gentiles find
Within thy courts a place.
How kind the care
Our God displays,
For us to raise
A house of prayer!

2 Though once estranged far,
We now approach the throne;
For Jesus brings us near,
And makes our cause his own:
Strangers no more,
To thee we come,
And find our home,
And rest secure.

3 To thee our souls we join,
And love thy sacred name;
No more our own, but thine,
We triumph in thy claim;
Our Father-king,
Thy covenant-grace
Our souls embrace,
Thy titles sing.

4 Here in thy house we feast
On dainties all divine;
And, while such sweets we taste,
With joy our faces shine.
Incense shall rise
From flames of love,
And God approve
The sacrifice.

5 May all the nations throng
To worship in thy house;
And thou attend the song,
And smile upon their vows,
Indulgent still,
Till earth conspire
To join the choir
On Zion's hill.

CXIV *Peace proclaimed, and the Fruit of the Lips created by a gracious God.* Isaiah lvii. 19.

1 HARK! for the great Creator speaks;
In silence let the earth attend,
And, when his words of grace are heard,
In grateful adoration bend!

2 "Tis I create the fruit of praise,
"And give the broken heart to sing;
"Peace, heavenly peace, my lips proclaim,
"Pleas'd with the happy news they bring."

3 Receive the tidings with delight,
Ye Gentile nations from afar;
And you, the children of his love,
Whom grace hath brought already near.

4 To these, to those, his sovereign hand
Its healing energy imparts:
Peace, peace, be echo'd from your tongues,
And echo'd from consenting hearts.

5 Enjoy the health, which God hath wrought;
Nor let the daily tribute cease,
Till chang'd for more exalted songs
In regions of eternal peace.

CXV. *The Duty of remonstrating against Sin, when Judgments are threatened.* Isaiah lviii. 1.

1 THY judgments cry aloud,
O ever-righteous God,
And in the sight of all our land
Thou liftest up thy rod.

2 Aloud thy servants cry,
Commission'd from thy throne,
And like a trumpet raise their voice
To make thy judgments known.

3 But who that cry attends,
And makes his safety sure?
Rock'd by the tempest they should flee,
They sleep the more secure.

4 Another trumpet, Lord,
The stupid slumberers need;
Nor will they hear a feebler voice
Than that, which wakes the dead.

CXVI. *Unsuccessful Fasts accounted for.* Isaiah lviii. 3. compared with 4—8.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 OH! where is sovereign mercy gone?
Whither is Britain's God withdrawn,
That through long years she should complain,
She fasts, and mourns, and cries in vain?

2 Hast thou not seen her suppliant bands
Through all her coasts extend their hands?
Or has their oft-repeated prayer
Escap'd thy ever-listening ear?

3 Thine ear hath heard, thine eye hath seen;
But guilt hath spread a cloud between;
And, rising still before thy face,
Averts thy long-intreated grace.

4 Dispel that cloud by rays divine,
And cause thy cheering face to shine;
Our isle shall shout from shore to shore,
And dread encroaching foes no more.

5 Our light shall like the morning spring;
Healing and joy our God shall bring;
Justice shall in our front appear,
And glory gather up our rear.

CXVII. *The Standard of the Spirit lifted up.* Isaiah lix. 19.

1 GOD of the ocean, at whose voice
The threatening floods are heard no more,
Behold their madness and their noise,
And silence the tumultuous roar.

2 Here streams of poisonous error swell;
There rages vice in every form;
They join their tide, led on by hell,
And Zion trembles at the storm.

3 Almighty Spirit, raise thine arm,
And lift the Saviour's standard high;
Thy people's hearts with vigour warm,
And call thy chosen legions nigh.

4 Wak'd by thy well-known voice they come,
And round the sacred banner throng;
Zion, prepare the conqueror room,
While triumph bursts into a song.

5 "The Lord on high, when billows roar,
"Superior majesty displays,
"And, by one breath of sovereign power,
"Hushes the noise of foaming seas."

CXVIII. *The Glory of the Church in the latter Day.* Isaiah lx. 1.

1 O Zion tune thy voice,
And raise thy hands on high;
Tell all the earth thy joys,
And boast salvation nigh;
Cheerful in God,
Arise and shine,
While rays divine
Stream all abroad.

2 He gilds thy mourning face
With beams that cannot fade;
His all-resplendent grace
He pours around thy head:
The nations round,
Thy form shall view,
With lustre new
Divinely crown'd.

3 In honour to his name
Reflect that sacred light;
And loud that grace proclaim,
Which makes thy darkness bright:
Pursue his praise,
Till sovereign love
In worlds above
The glory raise.

4 There on his holy hill
A brighter sun shall rise,
And with his radiance fill
Those fairer purer skies;
While round his throne
Ten thousand stars
In nobler spheres *
His influence own.

CXIX. *God the everlasting Light of the Saints above.* Isaiah lx. 20.

1 YE golden lamps of heaven, farewel,
With all your feeble light;
Farewel, thou ever-changing moon,
Pale empress of the night.

2 And thou, refulgent orb of day,
In brighter flames array'd;
My soul, that springs beyond thy sphere,
No more demands thine aid.

3 Ye stars are but the shining dust
Of my divine abode,

* Orbs, or paths, in which the stars move.

The pavement of those heavenly courts,
Where I shall reign with God.

4 The Father of eternal light
Shall there his beams display,
Nor shall one moment's darkness mix
With that unvaried day.

5 No more the drops of piercing grief
Shall swell into mine eyes,
Nor the meridian sun decline
Amidst those brighter skies.

6 There all the millions of his saints
Shall in one song unite,
And each the bliss of all shall view
With infinite delight.

CXX. *God intreated for Zion.* Isaiah lxii. 6, 7.

FOR A FAST-DAY; OR A DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

1 INDULGENT Sovereign of the skies,
And wilt thou bow thy gracious ear?
While feeble mortals raise their cries,
Wilt thou, the great Jehovah, hear?

2 How shall thy servants give thee rest,
Till Zion's mouldering walls thou raise?
Till thy own power shall stand confess'd,
And make Jerusalem a praise?

3 For this, a lowly suppliant crowd
Here in thy sacred temple wait:
For this, we lift our voices loud,
And call, and knock at mercy's gate.

4 Look down, O God, with pitying eye,
And view the desolation round;
See what wide realms in darkness lie,
And hurl their idols to the ground.

5 Loud let the gospel-trumpet blow,
And call the nations from afar;
Let all the Isles their Saviour know,
And earth's remotest ends draw near.

6 Let Babylon's proud altars shake,
And light invade her darkest gloom;
The yoke of iron bondage break,
The yoke of Satan, and of Rome.

7 With gentle beams on Britain shine,
And bless her princes, and her priests;
And, by thine energy divine,
Let sacred love o'erflow their breasts.

8 Triumphant here let Jesus reign,
And on his vineyard sweetly smile;
While all the virtues of his train
Adorn our church, adorn our isle.

9 On all our souls let grace descend,
Like heavenly dew in copious showers;
That we may call our God our friend,
That we may hail salvation ours.

10 Then shall each age and rank agree
United shouts of joy to raise;
And Zion, made a praise by thee,
To thee shall render back the praise.

CXXI. *A Nation born in a Day! or, The rapid Progress of the Gospel desired.* Isaiah lxvi. 8.

1 BEHOLD with pleasing ecstasy
The gospel standard lifted high,
That all the nations from afar
May in the great salvation share!

2 Why then, Almighty Saviour, why
Do wretched souls in millions die?
While wide th' infernal tyrant reigns
O'er spacious realms in ponderous chains.

3 And shall he still go on to boast,
Thy cross its energy hath lost?
And shall thy servants still complain,
Their labours, and their tears are vain?

4 Awake, all-conquering arm, awake,
And hell's extensive empire shake;
Assert the honours of thy throne,
And call this ruin'd world thy own.

5 Thine all successful power display;
Produce a nation in a day;
For at thy word this barren earth
Shall travail with a general birth.

6 Swift let thy quickening spirit breathe
On these abodes of sin and death!
That breath shall bow ten thousand minds,
Like waving corn before the winds.

7 Scarce can our glowing hearts endure
A world, where thou art known no more;
Transform it, Lord, by conquering love;
Or bear us to the realms above.

CXXII. *Backsliding Israel invited to return to God.* Jeremiah iii. 12, 13.

1 BACKSLIDING Israel, hear the voice
Of thy forgiving God,
Nor force such goodness to exert
The terrors of the rod.

2 Thus saith the Lord, "My mercy flows
"An unexhausted stream,
"And, after all its millions sav'd,
"Its sway is still supreme.

3 "One moment's wrath with weighty crush
"Might sink you quick to hell;
"Yet mercy points the happy path,
"Where life and glory dwell.

4 "Own but the follies thou hast done,
"And mourn thy sins in dust,
"And soon thy trembling heart shall learn
"To hope, and love, and trust."

5 All-gracious God, thy voice we own,
And, prostrate at thy feet,
Our souls in humble silence wait
A pardon there to meet.

CXXIII. *The Goodness of God acknowledged in giving Pastors after his own Heart.* Jeremiah iii. 15.

AT THE SETTLEMENT OF A MINISTER.

1 SHEPHERD of Israel, thou dost keep
With constant care thy humble sheep;
By thee inferior pastors rise
To feed our souls, and bless our eyes.

2 To all thy churches such impart,
Modell'd by thy own gracious heart;
Whose courage, watchfulness, and love
Men may attest, and God approve.

3 Fed by their active tender care,
Healthful may all thy sheep appear,
And, by their fair example led,
The way to Zion's pastures tread.

4 Here hast thou listen'd to our vows,
And scatter'd blessings on thy house;
Thy saints are succour'd, and no more
As sheep without a guide deplore.

5 Completely heal each former stroke,
And bless the Shepherd and the flock;
Confirm the hopes thy mercies raise,
And own this tribute of our praise.

CXXIV. *God's gracious Methods of adopting Love.* Jeremiah iii. 19.

1 AMAZING plan of sovereign love!
And doth our God look down
On rebels, whom his wrath might doom
To perish at his frown?

2 Doth he project a wonderous scheme
In such a way to save,
That justice, majesty, and grace,
May one joint triumph have?

3 One look the stubborn hearts subdues,
And at his feet they fall;
They own their Father with delight,
And he receives them all.

4 Number'd amongst his dearest sons,
The pleasant land they share;
On earth secur'd by power divine,
Till crown'd with glory there.

5 Father, in thine embraces lodg'd,
Our heaven begun we feel,
And wait the hour, which thou shalt mark
Thy counsels to fulfil.

CXXV. *Creatures vain, and God the Salvation of his People.* Jeremiah iii. 23.

1 HOW long shall dreams of creature-bliss
Our flattering hopes employ,
And mock our fond deluded eyes
With visionary * joy?

2 Why from the mountains and the hills
Is our salvation sought,
While our eternal rock's forsook,
And Israel's God forgot?

3 The living spring neglected flows
Full in our daily view,
Yet we with anxious fruitless toil
Our broken cisterns hew.

4 These fatal errors, gracious God,
With gentle pity see;
To thee our roving eyes direct,
And fix our souls on thee.

CXXVI. *Invitation to return to the Lord, and put away Abominations.* Jeremiah iv. 1, 2.

1 IT is the Lord of glory calls,
O let his Israel hear:

* The appearance of joy.

" Stop, ye revolters, in your course,
" And hearken, and come near.

2 " What though in sin's delusive paths
" Ye from your youth have stray'd ;
" What though my messages of love
" Have been with scorn repay'd ;

3 " At last return, and grace divine
" Your wanderings shall forget ;
" If loyal zeal and love dethrone
" Each idol from its seat.

4 " Return, and dwell secure on earth,
" As in your Lord's embrace,
" Till in the land of perfect joy
" Ye find a nobler place."

5 Father of mercies, lo, we come,
Subdu'd by such a call :
O let the hand of grace divine
Reduce, and bless us all.

6 So will we teach the world that love,
Which we are made to see,
And wanderers shall with us return,
And bless themselves in thee.

CXXVII. *Misimproved Privileges, and disappointed Hopes.*
Jeremiah viii. 20.

1 ALAS, how fast our moments fly !
How short our months appear !
How swift through various seasons hastes
The still-revolving year !

2 Seasons of grace, and days of hope,
While Jesus waiting stands,
And spreads the blessings of his love
With wide-extended hands.

3 But O ! how slow our stupid souls
These blessings to secure !
Blessings, which through eternal years
Unwithering shall endure.

4 Beneath the word of life we die ;
We starve amidst our store ;
And what salvation should impart,
Heightens our ruin more.

5 Pity this madness, God of love,
And make us truly wise :
So from the pregnant seeds of grace
Shall glorious harvests rise.

CXXVIII. *Glorying in God alone.* Jeremiah ix. 23, 24.

1 THE righteous Lord, supremely great,
Maintains his universal state;
O'er all the earth his power extends,
All heaven before his footstool bends.

2 Yet justice still with power presides,
And mercy all his empire guides;
Such works are pleasing in his sight,
And such the men of his delight.

3 No more, ye wise, your wisdom boast:
No more, ye strong, your valour trust:
Nor let the rich survey his store,
Elate with heaps of shining ore.

4 Glory, my soul, in this alone,
That God, thy God, to thee is known,
That thou hast own'd his sovereign sway,
That thou hast felt his cheering ray.

5 My wisdom, wealth, and power I find
In one Jehovah all combin'd;
On him I fix my roving eyes,
Till all my soul in rapture rise.

6 All else, which I my treasure call,
May in one fatal moment fall;
But what his happiness can move,
Whom God the blessed deigns to love?

CXXIX. *Jeremiah's Tears over the captive Flock.* Jeremiah xiii. 15—17.

1 FLOW on, my tears, in rising streams,
Ye briny fountains, flow;
While haughty sinners steel their hearts,
Nor will Jehovah know!

2 The flock of God is captive led
In Satan's heavy chains;
Led to the borders of the pit,
Where endless horror reigns.

3 Look back, ye captives, and invoke
Jehovah's saving aid;
Give him the glory of his name,
Whose hand your nature made.

4 O turn, ere yet your erring feet
On death's dark mountain fall;
Cry, and your gentle Shepherd's ear
Will hearken to your call.

5 Then shall those hearts with pleasure spring,
Which now in sorrow melt;

And deep repentance yield a joy
Proud guilt hath never felt.

6 Almighty grace, exert thy power,
And turn these slaves of sin;
And, when they bring thy tribute due,
Shall their own bliss begin.

CXXX. *Giving Glory to God, before Darkness comes upon us.* Jeremiah xiii. 16.

1 THE swift-declining day,
How fast its moments fly!
While evening's broad and gloomy shade
Gains on the western sky.

2 Ye mortals, mark its pace,
And use the hours of light;
And know, its Maker can command
An instantaneous * night.

3 His word blots out the sun
In its meridian blaze;
And cuts from smiling vigorous youth
The remnant of its days.

4 On the dark mountain's brow
Your feet shall quickly slide;
And from its airy summit dash
Your momentary pride.

5 Give glory to the Lord,
Who rules the whirling sphere†;
Submissive at his footstool bow,
And seek salvation there.

6 Then shall new lustre break
Through horror's darkest gloom,
And lead you to unchanging light
In a celestial home.

CXXXI. *The fatal Consequences of forsaking the Hope of Israel.* Jeremiah xvii. 13, 14.

1 GREAT object of thine Israel's hope,
Its Saviour, and its praise,
Attend, while we to thee devote
The remnant of our days.

2 How wretched they that leave the Lord,
And from his word withdraw,
That lose his gospel from their sight,
And wander from his law!

* Sudden. † The revolution of the sun, moon, and stars.

3 O thou eternal spring of good,
Whence living waters flow,
Let not our thirsty erring souls
To broken cisterns go!

4 Like characters inscrib'd in dust
Are sinners borne away;
And all the treasures they can boast,
The portion of a day.

5 But, Lord, to thee my heart shall turn
To heal it, and to save;
The joys, that from thy favour flow,
Shall bloom beyond the grave.

CXXXII. *Christ, the Lord our Righteousness.* Jeremiah xxiii. 6.

1 SAVIOUR divine, we know thy name,
And in that name we trust;
Thou art the Lord our righteousness,
Thou art thine Israel's boast.

2 Guilty we plead before thy throne,
And low in dust we lie,
Till Jesus stretch his gracious arm
To bring the guilty nigh.

3 The sins of one most righteous day
Might plunge us in despair;
Yet all the crimes of numerous years
Shall our great surety clear.

4 That spotless robe, which he hath wrought,
Shall deck us all around;
Nor by the piercing eye of God
One blemish shall be found.

5 Pardon, and peace, and lively hope
To sinners now are given;
Israel and Judah soon shall change
Their wilderness for heaven.

6 With joy we taste that manna now,
Thy mercy scatters down;
We seal our humble vows to thee,
And wait the promis'd crown.

CXXXIII. *The Efficacy of God's Word.* Jeremiah xxiii. 29.

1 WITH reverend awe, tremendous Lord,
We hear the thunders of thy word;
The pride of Lebanon it breaks:
Swift the celestial fire descends,
The flinty rock in pieces rends,
And earth to its deep centre shakes.

2 Array'd in majesty divine,
Here sanctity and justice shine,
And horror strikes the rebel through;
While loud this awful voice makes known
The wonders which thy sword hath done,
And what thy vengeance yet shall do.

3 So spread the honours of thy name;
The terrors of a God proclaim;
Thick let the pointed arrows fly;
Till sinners, humbled in the dust,
Shall own the execution just,
And bless the hand by which they die.

4 Then clear the dark tempestuous day,
And radiant beams of love display;
Each prostrate soul let mercy raise:
So shall the bleeding captives feel,
Thy word, which gave the wound, can heal,
And change their groans to songs of praise.

CXXXIV. *The Possibility of dying this Year.* Jeremiah xxviii. 16.

FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 GOD of my life, thy constant care
With blessings crowns each opening year;
This guilty life dost thou prolong,
And wake anew mine annual song.

2 How many precious souls are fled
To the vast regions of the dead,
Since from this day the changing sun
Through his last yearly period run!

3 We yet survive; but who can say,
Or through the year, or month, or day,
"I will retain this vital breath;
"Thus far at least in league with death*?"

4 That breath is thine, eternal God;
'Tis thine to fix my soul's abode;
It holds its life from thee alone,
On earth, or in the world unknown.

5 To thee our spirits we resign;
Make them, and own them still as thine;
So shall they smile, secure from fear,
Though death should blast the rising year.

6 Thy children, eager to be gone,
Bid time's impetuous tide roll on,
And land them on that blooming shore,
Where years and death are known no more.

* Isaiah xxviii. 15.

CXXXV. *God's Complacency in his Thoughts of Peace towards his People.* Jeremiah xxix. 11.

1 VILER than dust, O Lord, are we;
And doth thine anger cease?
And doth thy gracious heart o'erflow
With purposes of peace?

2 And dost thou with delight reflect
On what thy grace shall do?
And with complacency of soul
Enjoy the distant view?

3 And can thy often-injur'd love
So kind a message send,
That thou to all our lengthen'd woes
Wilt give the expected end?

4 Why droop our hearts? Why flow our eyes,
While such a voice we hear?
Why rise our sorrows and our fears,
While such a friend is near?

5 To all thy other favours add
A heart to trust thy word,
And death itself shall hear us sing,
While resting on the Lord.

CXXXVI. *The impudent Rebellion of the Jewish Refuges at Pathros.* Jeremiah xliv. 16, 17, 28.

1 WHOSE words against the Lord are stout?
Or who presume to say,
"That sovereign law, which God proclaims,
"I dare to disobey?"

2 Ten thousand actions every where
The impious language speak:
Yet power omnipotent stands by,
Nor do its thunders break.

3 But O! the dreadful day draws near,
When God's avenging hand
Shall shew, if feeble mortals breath,
Or God's own word shall stand.

4 My soul, with prostrate reverence fall,
Before the voice divine;
And all thine interest, and thy powers
To its command resign.

5 Speak, mighty Lord; thy servant waits
The purport of thy will:

My heart with secret ardour glows
Its mandates* to fulfil.

6 Let the vain sons of Belial boast
Their tongues and thoughts are free;
My noblest liberty I own,
When subject most to thee.

CXXXVII. *Asking the Way to Zion, in Order to joining in Covenant with God.* Jeremiah l. 5.

1 ENQUIRE, ye pilgrims, for the way,
That leads to Zion's hill,
And thither set your steady face
With a determin'd will.

2 Invite the strangers all around
Your pious march to join;
And spread the sentiments you feel
Of faith and love divine.

3 Come, let us to his temple haste,
And seek his favour there,
Before his footstool humbly bow,
And pour out fervent prayer.

4 Come, let us join our souls to God
In everlasting bands,
And seize the blessings he bestows
With eager hearts and hands.

5 Come, let us seal without delay
The covenant of his grace;
Nor shall the years of distant life
Its memory efface†.

6 Thus may our rising offspring haste
To seek their father's God,
Nor e'er forsake the happy path
Their youthful feet have trod.

CXXXVIII. *Searching and trying our Ways.* Lamentations iii. 40.

1 THY piercing eye, O God, surveys
The various windings of our ways;
Teach us their tendency to know,
And judge the paths in which we go.

2 How wild, how crooked have they been!
A maze of foolishness and sin!
With all the light we vainly boast,
Leaving our guide, our souls are lost.

* Commands, † Blot out, destroy.

3 Had not thy mercy been our aid,
So fatally our feet had stray'd,
Stern justice had its prisoners led
Down to the chambers of the dead.

4 O turn us back to thee again,
Or we shall search our ways in vain;
Shine, and the path of life reveal,
And bear us on to Zion's hill.

5 Roll on, ye swift-revolving years,
And end this round of sins and cares;
No more a wanderer would I roam,
But near my Father fix at home.

CXXXIX. *The Breath of our Nostrils taken in the Pits of the Enemy; applied to Christ.* Lamentations iv. 20.

1 BLEST Saviour, to my heart more dear
Than balmy gales of vital air;
Were thy soul-cheering presence gone,
What use of breath, unless to groan?

2 Thy Father's royal hand hath shed,
In rich profusion on thy head,
Ten thousand graces; Thou alone
Canst share, and canst adorn his throne.

3 But see the Sovereign captive led,
Snar'd in the pit, which traitors made,
Fetter'd with ignominious bands,
And murder'd by rebellious hands.

4 Ye saints, to your expiring King,
Your tributary sorrows bring:
In loyal crouds assemble round,
And bathe in tears each precious wound.

5 But from the caverns of the grave
He springs, omnipotent to save;
The Captive-King ascends and reigns,
And drags his conquered foes in chains.

6 Beneath his shade our souls shall live,
In all the rapture heaven can give;
Where Zion never shall deplore,
And heathens vex his church no more.

CXL. *Of lamenting national Sins.* Ezekiel ix. 4—6.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 O Righteous God, thou Judge supreme,
We tremble at thy dreadful name,
And all our crying guilt we own
In dust and tears before thy throne.

2 So manifold our crimes have been,
Such crimson tincture dyes our sin,
That, could we all its horrors know,
Our streaming eyes with blood might flow.

3 Britain, the land thine arm hath sav'd,
That arm most impiously hath brav'd;
Britain, the Isle its God hath lov'd,
A rebel to that love hath prov'd.

4 Estrang'd from reverential awe,
We trample on thy sacred law;
And, though such wonders grace hath done,
Anew we crucify thy Son.

5 Justly might this polluted land
Prove all the vengeance of thy hand;
And, bath'd in heaven*, thy sword might come
To drink our blood, and seal our doom.

6 Yet hast thou not a remnant here,
Whose souls are fill'd with pious fear?
O bring thy wonted mercy nigh,
While prostrate at thy feet they lie.

7 Behold their tears, attend their moan,
Nor turn away their secret groan:
With these we join our humble prayer;
Our nation shield, our country spare.

8 But if the sentence be decreed,
And our dear native land must bleed,
By thy sure mark may we be known,
And safe in life or death thy own.

CXLI. *The Iniquity of sacrificing God's Children; or, The Evil of a bad or neglected Education.* Ezekiel xvi. 20, 21 †.

1 BEHOLD, O Israel's God,
From thine exalted throne,
And view the desolate abode,
Thou once hast call'd thy own.

2 The children of thy flock,
By early covenant thine,
See how they pour their bleeding souls
On every idol's shrine!

3 To indolence and pride
What piteous victims made!

* Isaiah xxxiv. 5.

† Alluding to the cruel custom among some heathens of sacrificing their children to their Gods, to which there are frequent references in scripture.

Crush'd in their parent's fond embrace,
And by their care betray'd.

4 By pleasure's polish'd dart
What numbers here are slain!
What numbers there for slaughter bound
In Mammon's golden chain!

5 O let thine arm awake,
And dash the idols down:
O call the captives of their power
Their treasure, and thy crown.

6 Thee let the fathers own,
And thee the sons adore,
Join'd to the Lord by solemn vows,
To be forgot no more.

CXLII. *The Humility and Submission of a Penitent.* Ezekiel xvi. 63.

1 O Injur'd Majesty of heaven,
Look from thy holy throne,
While prostrate rebels own with grief
What treasons they have done.

2 Thy grace, when sin abounded most,
Reigns with superior sway;
And pardons, bought with Jesus' blood,
To rebels doth display.

3 While love its grateful anthems tunes,
Tears mingle with the song;
My heart with tender anguish bleeds,
That I such grace should wrong.

4 How shall I lift these guilty eyes
To mine offended Lord?
Or how, beneath his heaviest strokes,
Pronounce one murmuring word?

5 Remorse and shame my lips have seal'd;
But O! my Father, speak;
And all the harmony of heaven
Shall through the silence break.

CXLIII. *God bringing his People into the Covenant under the Rod.* Ezekiel xx. 37.

1 HOW gracious and how wise
Is our chastising God!
And O! how rich the blessings are,
Which blossom from his rod!

2 He lifts it up on high
With pity in his heart,

That every stroke his children feel
May grace and peace impart.

3 Instructed thus they bow,
And own his sovereign sway;
They turn their erring footsteps back
To his forsaken way.

4 His covenant-love they seek,
And seek the happy bands,
That closer still engage their hearts
To honour his commands.

5 Dear Father, we consent
To discipline divine;
And bless the pains, that make our souls
Still more completely thine.

CXLIV. *God's Condescension in becoming the Shepherd of Men.*
Ezekiel xxxiv. 31.

1 AND will the Majesty of heaven
Accept us for his sheep?
And with a shepherd's tender care
Such worthless creatures keep?

2 And will he spread his guardian-arms
Round our defenceless head?
And cause us gently to lie down
In his refreshing shade?

3 And will he lead our weary souls
To that delightful scene,
Where rivers of salvation flow
Through pastures ever green?

4 What thanks can mortal men repay
For favours great as thine?
Or how can tongues of feeble clay
Proclaim such love divine?

5 Eternal God, how mean are we!
How richly gracious thou!
Our souls, o'erwhelm'd with humble joy,
In silent transports bow.

CXLV. *Seeking to God for the Communication of his Spirit.*
Ezekiel xxxvi. 37.

1 HEAR, gracious Sovereign, from thy throne,
And send thy various blessings down:
While by thine Israel thou art sought,
Attend the prayer thy word hath taught.

2 Come, sacred Spirit, from above,
And fill the coldest heart with love;

Soften to flesh the rugged stone,
And let thy godlike power be known.

3 Speak thou, and from the haughtiest eyes
Shall floods of pious sorrow rise;
While all their glowing souls are borne
To seek that grace, which now they scorn.

4 O let a holy flock await,
Numerous around thy temple gate,
Each pressing on with zeal to be
A living sacrifice to thee.

5 In answer to our fervent cries,
Give us to see thy church arise;
Or, if that blessing seem too great,
Give us to mourn its low estate.

CXLVI. *Ezekiel's Vision of the dry Bones.* Ezekiel xxxvii. 3.

1 LOOK down, O Lord, with pitying eye;
See Adam's race in ruin lie;
Sin spreads its trophies o'er the ground,
And scatters slaughter'd heaps around.

2 And can these mouldering corpses live?
And can these perish'd bones revive?
That, mighty God, to thee is known;
That wondrous work is all thy own.

3 Thy ministers are sent in vain
To prophecy upon the slain;
In vain they call, in vain they cry,
Till thine Almighty aid is nigh.

4 But if thy Spirit deign to breathe,
Life spreads through all the realms of death;
Dry bones obey thy powerful voice;
They move, they waken, they rejoice.

5 So when thy trumpet's awful sound
Shall shake the heavens, and rend the ground,
Dead saints shall from their tombs arise,
And spring to life beyond the skies.

CXLVII. *The Waters of the Sanctuary healing the dead Sea* *. Ezekiel xlvii. 8, 9.

1 GREAT source of being and of love,
Thou waterest all the worlds above,
And all the joys we mortals know,
From thine exhaustless fountain flow.

* The sea or lake, where Sodom, Gomorrah, &c. had stood, which was putrid and poisonous; and ancient writers say, that no fish could live in it.

2 A sacred spring, at thy command,
From Zion's mount, in Canaan's land,
Beside thy temple, cleaves the ground,
And pours its limpid stream around.

3 The limpid stream with sudden force
Swells to a river in its course;
Through desart realms its windings play,
And scatter blessings all the way.

4 Close by its banks in order fair,
The blooming trees of life appear;
Their blossoms fragrant odours give,
And on their fruit the nations live.

5 To the dead sea the waters flow,
And carry healing as they go;
Its poisonous dregs their power confess,
And all its shores the fountain bless.

6 Flow, wondrous stream, with glory crown'd,
Flow on to earth's remotest bound;
And bear us on thy gentle wave
To him, who all thy virtues gave.

CXLVIII. *Tekel; or, The Sinner weighed in God's Balances, and found wanting.* Daniel v. 27.

1 RAISE, thoughtless sinner, raise thine eye;
Behold God's balance lifted high;
There shall his justice be display'd,
And there thy hope and life be weigh'd.

2 See in one scale his perfect law;
Mark with what force its precepts draw:
Wouldst thou the awful test sustain,
Thy works how light! thy thoughts how vain!

3 Behold the hand of God appears
To trace these dreadful characters;
"Tekel, thy soul is wanting found,
"And wrath shall smite thee to the ground."

4 Let sudden fear thy nerves unbrace;
Let horror shake thy tottering knees*;
Through all thy thoughts let anguish roll,
And deep repentance melt thy soul.

5 One only hope may yet prevail;
Christ hath a weight to turn the scale;
Still doth the gospel publish peace,
And shew a Saviour's righteousness.

* Compare verse 6.

6 Great God, exert thy power to save;
Deep on the heart these truths engrave;
The ponderous load of guilt remove,
That trembling lips may sing thy love.

CXLIX. *The Backslider recollecting himself in his Afflictions.* Hosea ii. 6, 7.

1 THE Lord, how kind are all his ways,
When most they seem severe!
He frowns, and scourges, and rebukes,
That we may learn his fear.

2 With thorns he fences up our path,
And builds a wall around,
To guard us from the death, that lurks
In sin's forbidden ground.

3 When other lovers, sought in vain,
Our fond address despise,
He opens his indulgent arms
With pity in his eyes.

4 Return, ye wandering souls, return,
And seek his tender breast;
Call back the memory of the days,
When there you found your rest.

5 Behold, O Lord, we fly to thee,
Though blushes veil our face,
Constrain'd our last retreat to seek
In thy much-injur'd grace.

CL. *The Advantages of seeking the Knowledge of God.* Hosea vi. 3.

1 SHINE forth, eternal source* of light,
And make thy glories known;
Fill our enlarg'd adoring sight
With lustre all thy own.

2 Vain are the charms, and faint the rays
The brightest creatures boast;
And all their grandeur, and their praise
Is in thy presence lost.

3 To know the author of our frame
Is our sublimest skill:
True science is to read thy name,
True life t' obey thy will.

* Fountain or original.

4 For this I long, for this I pray,
And following on pursue,
Till visions of eternal day
Fix and complete the view.

CLI. *Inconstancy in Religion.* Hosea vi. 4.

1 PERPETUAL source of light and grace,
We hail thy sacred name:
Through every year's revolving round
Thy goodness is the same.

2 On us, all worthless as we are,
Its wondrous mercy pours;
Sure as the heaven's establish'd course,
And plenteous as the showers.

3 Inconstant service we repay,
And treacherous vows renew;
False as the morning's scattering cloud,
And transient as the dew.

4 In flowing tears our guilt we mourn,
And loud implore thy grace
To bear our feeble footsteps on
In all thy righteous ways.

5 Arm'd with this energy divine,
Our souls shall stedfast move;
And with increasing transport press
On to thy courts above.

6 So by thy power the morning sun
Pursues his radiant way,
Brightens each moment in his race,
And shines to perfect day.

CLII. *Gratitude the Spring of true Religion.* Hosea xi. 4.

1 MY God, what silken cords are thine!
How soft, and yet how strong!
While power, and truth, and love combine
To draw our souls along.

2 Thou saw'st us crush'd beneath the yoke
Of Satan and of sin:
Thy hand the iron bondage broke
Our worthless hearts to win.

3 The guilt of twice ten thousand sins
One moment takes away;
And grace, when first the war begins,
Secures the crowning day.

4 Comfort through all this vale of tears
In rich profusion flows,
And glory of unnumber'd years
Eternity bestows.

5 Drawn by such cords we onward move,
Till round thy throne we meet;
And, captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our conqueror's feet.

CLIII. *The Relentings of God's Heart over his backsliding People.* Hosea xi. 7, 8, 9.

1 YE sinners on backsliding bent,
God's gracious call attend;
Shall not compassion so divine
Each stubborn spirit bend?

2 "How shall I give mine Israel up
"To ruin and despair?
"How pour down showers of flaming wrath,
"And make a Sodom there?

3 "My bowels strong relentings feel;
"My heart is pain'd within:
"I will not all my wrath exert,
"Nor visit all their sin.

4 "The mercy of a God restrains
"The thunders of his hand:
"Come, seek protection from that power,
"Which you can ne'er withstand."

5 With trembling haste, O God, to thee
Let sinners wing their flight;
As doves, when birds of prey pursue,
Down on their windows light.

6 Father, we seek thy gracious arm,
All melted at thy voice:
O may thy heart, that feels our woes,
In our return rejoice.

CLIV. *God's Controversy by Fire.* Amos iv. 11.
ON OCCASION OF A DREADFUL FIRE.

1 ETERNAL God, our humbled souls
Before thy presence bow:
With all thy magazines of wrath,
How terrible art thou!

2 Fann'd by thy breath, whole sheets of flame
Do like a deluge pour;
And all our confidence of wealth
Lies moulder'd in an hour.

3 Led on by thee in horrid pomp,
Destruction rears its head;
And blacken'd walls, and smoaking heaps,
Through all the street are spread.

4 Lord, in the dust we lay us down,
And mourn thy righteous ire*;
Yet bless the hand of guardian-love,
That snatch'd us from the fire.

5 O that the hateful dregs of sin
Like dross had perish'd there;
That in fair lines our purged souls
Might thy bright image bear.

6 So shall we view with dauntless eyes
The last tremendous day,
When earth and seas, and stars and skies,
In flames shall melt away.

CLV. *Britain unreformed by remarkable Deliverances.* Amos iv. 11.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 YES, Britain seem'd to ruin doom'd,
Just like a burning brand;
Till snatch'd from fierce surrounding flames
By God's indulgent hand.

2 "Once more," he says, "I will suppress
"The wrath, that sin would wake;
"Once more my patience shall attend,
"And call my Britain back,"

3 But who this clemency reveres?
Or feels this melting grace?
Who stirs his languid spirit up
To seek thine awful face?

4 On days like these we pour our cries,
And at thy feet we mourn;
Then rise to tempt thy wrath again,
And to our sins return.

5 Our nation far from God remains,
Far, as in distant years;
And the small remnant that is found,
A dying aspect wears.

6 Chasten'd and rescu'd thus in vain,
Thy righteous hand severe
Into the flames might hurl us back,
And quite consume us there.

* Anger.

7 So, by the light our burning gives,
Might neighbouring nations read,
How terrible thy judgments are,
And learn our guilt to dread.

8 Yet 'midst the cry of sins like ours,
Incline thy gracious ear;
And thy own children's feeble cry
With soft compassion hear.

9 O by thy sacred spirit's breath
Kindle a holy flame;
Refine the land thou might'st destroy,
And magnify thy name.

CLVI. *Preparing to meet God.* Amos iv. 12, 13.

1 HE comes, thy God, O Israel, comes;
Prepare thy God to meet:
Meet him in battle's force array'd,
Or humbled at his feet.

2 He form'd the mountains by his strength;
He makes the winds to blow;
And all the secret thoughts of man
Must his Creator know.

3 He shades the morning's opening rays;
He shakes the solid world;
And stars and angels from their seats
Are by his thunder hurl'd.

4 Eternal Sovereign of the skies!
And shall thine Israel dare
In mad rebellion to arise,
And tempt the unequal war?

5 Lo, nations tremble at thy frown,
And faint beneath thy rod;
Crush'd by its gentlest movement down,
They fall, tremendous God!

6 Avert the terrors of thy wrath,
And let thy mercy shine;
While humble penitence and prayer
Approve us truly thine.

CLVII. *Jonah's Faith recommended.* Jonah ii. 4.

1 LORD, we have broke thy holy laws,
And slighted all thy grace;
And justly thy vindictive * wrath
Might cast us from thy face.

* Avenging.

2 Yet while such precedents appear
Mark'd by the sacred book,
We from these depths of guilt and fear
Will to thy temple look.

3 To thee, in our Redeemer's name,
We raise our humble cries;
May these our prayers, perfum'd by him,
Like grateful incense rise.

4 O never may our hopeless eyes
An absent God deplore,
Where the dear temples of thy love
Shall stand reveal'd no more.

5 Far from those regions of despair
Appoint our souls a place,
Where not a frown through endless years
Shall veil thy lovely face.

## CLVIII. *God's Controversy with Britain stated and pleaded.* Micah vi. 1, 2, 3.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 LISTEN, ye hills; ye mountains hear;
Jehovah vindicates his laws:
Trembling in silence at his bar,
Thou earth, attend thy Maker's cause.

2 Israel appear; present thy plea;
And charge the Almighty to his face;
Say, if his rules oppressive be;
Say, if defective be his grace.

3 Eternal Judge, the action cease;
Our lips are seal'd in conscious shame;
'Tis ours, in sackcloth to confess,
And thine, the sentence to proclaim.

4 Ten thousand witnesses arise;
Thy mercies, and our crimes appear,
More than the stars that deck the skies,
And all our dreadful guilt declare.

5 How shall we come before thy face,
And in thine awful presence bow?
What offers can secure thy grace,
Or calm the terrors of thy brow?

6 Thousands of rams in vain might bleed;
Rivers of oil might blaze in vain;
Or the first-born's devoted head
With horrid gore thine altar stain.

7 But thy own Lamb, all-gracious God,
Whom impious sinners dar'd to slay,
Hath sovereign virtue in his blood
To purge the nation's guilt away.

8 With humble faith to that we fly;
With that be Britain sprinkled o'er;
Trembling no more in dust we lie,
And dread thy hand and bar no more.

CLIX. *Hearing the Voice of God's Rod.* Micah vi. 9.

1 ATTEND, my soul, with reverend awe,
The dictates of thy God;
Silent and trembling hear the voice
Of his appointed rod.

2 Now let me search and try my ways,
And prostrate seek his face,
Conscious of guilt before his throne
In dust my soul abase.

3 Teach me, my God, what's yet unknown,
And all my crimes forgive;
Those crimes would I no more repeat,
But to thy honour live.

4 My wither'd joys too plainly shew,
That all on earth is vain;
In God my wounded heart confides
True rest and bliss to gain.

5 Father, I wait thy gracious call,
To leave this mournful land,
And bathe in rivers of delight,
That flow at thy right hand.

CLX. *God's incomparable Mercy admired.* Micah vii. 18, 19, 20.

1 SUPREME in mercy, who shall dare
With thy compassion to compare?
For thy own sake wilt thou forgive,
And bid the trembling sinner live.

2 Millions of our transgressions past,
Cancell'd, behind thy back are cast;
Thy grace, a sea without a shore,
O'erflows them, and they rise no more.

3 And lest new legions should invade,
And make the pardon'd soul afraid,
Our inbred lusts thou wilt subdue,
And form degenerate hearts anew.

4 Our leader-God, our songs proclaim ;
We lift our banners in his name ;
With songs of triumph forth we go,
And level the gigantic foe.

5 His truth to Jacob shall prevail ;
His oath to Abram cannot fail ;
The hope of saints in ancient days,
Which ages yet unborn shall praise.

CLXI. *The impoverished Saint rejoicing in God.* Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

1 SO firm the saint's foundations stand,
Nor can his hopes remove ;
Sustain'd by God's Almighty hand,
And shelter'd in his love.

2 Fig-trees and olive-plants may fail,
And vines their fruit deny,
Famine through all his fields prevail,
And flocks and herds may die.

3 God is the treasure of his soul,
A source of sacred joy ;
Which no afflictions can controul,
Nor death itself destroy.

4 Lord, may we feel thy cheering beams,
And taste thy saint's repose.
We will not mourn the perish'd streams,
While such a fountain flows.

CLXII. *God's afflicted Poor trusting in his Name.* Zephaniah iii. 12.

1 PRAISE to the Sovereign of the sky,
Who from his lofty throne
Looks down on all that humble lie,
And calls such souls his own !

2 The haughty sinner he disdains,
Though gems his temples crown ;
And from the seat of pomp and pride
His vengeance hurls him down.

3 On his afflicted pious poor
He makes his face to shine ;
He fills their cottages of clay
With lustre all divine.

4 Among the meanest of thy flock
There let my dwelling be,
Rather than under gilded roofs,
If absent, Lord, from thee.

5 Poor and afflicted though we are,
In thy strong name we trust;
And bless the hand of sovereign love,
Which lifts us from the dust.

CLXIII. *God comforting and rejoicing over Zion.* Zephaniah iii. 16, 17.

1 YES, 'tis the voice of love divine!
And O! how sweet the accents sound!
Afflicted Zion, rise and shine,
Fair mourner, prostrate on the ground.

2 The mighty God, thy glorious king,
Tender to pity, strong to save,
Hath sworn he will salvation bring,
Though sorrow press me to the grave.

3 He all a father's pleasure knows
To fold thee in his dear embrace;
His heart with secret joy o'erflows,
And cheerful smiles adorn his face.

4 At length the inward ecstasy
In heavenly music breaks its way *;
Jehovah leads the harmony,
And angels teach their harps the lay †.

5 Fain would my lips the chorus join,
And tell the listening world my joys,
But condescension so divine
In silence swallows up my voice.

CLXIV. *Practical Reflections on the State of our Fathers.* Zechariah i. 5.

1 HOW swift the torrent rolls,
That bears us to the sea!
The tide, that bears our thoughtless souls
To vast eternity!

2 Our fathers, where are they,
With all they call'd their own?
Their joys and griefs, and hopes and cares,
And wealth and honour gone.

3 But joy or grief succeeds
Beyond our mortal thought,
While the poor remnant of their dust
Lies in the grave forgot.

4 There, where the fathers lie,
Must all the children dwell;
Nor other heritage possess,
But such a gloomy cell.

* See the marginal reading. † Song.

5 God of our fathers, hear,
Thou everlasting friend!
While we, as on life's utmost verge *,
Our souls to thee commend.

6 Of all the pious dead
May we the footsteps trace,
Till with them in the land of light
We dwell before thy face.

CLXV. *Joshua the High-Priest's Change of Raiment, applied to Christian Privileges.* Zechariah iii. 4.

1 ETERNAL king, thy robes are white
In spotless rays of heavenly light;
Adoring angels round are seen,
Yet in thy presence are not clean.

2 What then are we, the sons of earth,
That draw pollution from our birth?
Our fleshly garments, Lord, how mean!
O'erspread with hateful spots of sin.

3 Hail to that condescending grace,
Which shews a Saviour's righteousness!
Eternal honours to that name,
Which covers all our guilt and shame!

4 His blood, an overflowing sea,
Shall purge our deepest stains away:
Our souls, renew'd by grace divine,
Shall in their Lord's resemblance shine.

5 Yet, while these rags of flesh we wear,
Pollution will again appear:
Come, death, and ease me of the load;
Come, death, and bear my soul to God.

6 The king of heaven will there bestow
A richer robe, than monarchs know;
Dress all his saints in glittering white;
Not Joshua's mitre shone so bright.

7 The grave its trophies shall resign;
Christ will the mouldering dust refine;
And death, the last of foes, shall be
Swallow'd and lost in victory.

8 My faith, on towering pinions borne,
Anticipates that glorious morn;
And with celestial raptures strong,
Gives mortal lips the immortal song.

* Edge or border.

CLXVI. *Joshua the High-Priest's Zeal and Fidelity rewarded with a Station among the Angels.* Zechariah iii. 6, 7.

FOR THE ORDINATION OF A MINISTER.

1 GREAT Lord of angels we adore
The grace, that builds thy courts below;
And through ten thousand sons of light
Stoops to regard what mortals do.

2 Amidst the wastes of time and death,
Successive pastors thou dost raise
Thy charge to keep, thy house to guide,
And form a people for thy praise.

3 The heavenly natives with delight
Hover around the sacred place;
Nor scorn to learn from mortal tongues
The wonders of redeeming grace.

4 At length, dismiss'd from feeble clay,
Thy servants join the angelic band;
With them through distant worlds they fly,
With them before thy presence stand.

5 O glorious hope! O blest employ!
Sweet lenitive * of grief and care!
When shall we reach those radiant courts,
And all their joy and honour share?

6 Yet while these labours we pursue,
Thus distant from thy heavenly throne,
Give us a zeal and love like theirs,
And half their heaven shall here be known.

CLXVII. *The completing of the Spiritual Temple.* Zechariah iv. 7.

1 SING to the Lord above,
Who deigns on earth to raise
A temple to his love,
A monument of praise.
Ye saints around,
Through all its frame,
The builder's name
Harmonious sound.

2 He form'd the glorious plan,
And its foundation laid,
That God might dwell with man,
And mercy be display'd;

* What easeth or assuageth.

His son he sent,
Who, great and good,
Made his own blood
The sweet cement.

3 Beneath his eye and care
The edifice shall rise
Majestic strong and fair,
And shine above the skies.
There shall he place
The polish'd stone,
Ordain'd to crown
This work of grace.

CLXVIII. *The Error of despising the Day of small Things.*
Zechariah iv. 10.

1 "WHAT haughty scorner," saith the Lord,
"Shall humble things despise,
"When he beholds them with delight,
"Who reigns beyond the skies?

2 "I from a chaos dark and wild *
"Made heaven's bright host appear:
"I from the small unnotic'd seeds
"The loftiest cedars rear.

3 "From Eden's dust I Adam form'd,
"The noblest human frame;
"And in his humble sons display
"The honours of my name.

4 "From fishermen, in number few,
"In human hearts untaught,
"All the wide realms my church can boast,
"My potent hand hath brought.

5 "The pious poor, by men despis'd,
"In dearest bonds are mine;
"Once hardly drest in humble weeds †,
"They now like angels shine."

6 Lord, if such trophies rais'd from dust
Thy sovereign glory be,
Here in my heart thy power may find
Materials fit for thee.

CLXIX. *Prisoners delivered from the Pit by the Blood of the Covenant.*
Zechariah ix. 11.

1 YE prisoners, who in bondage lie,
In darkness and the pit,

* Genesis i. 2, 3. † Garments.

Behold the grace that sets us free,
And to that grace submit.

2 The tidings of deliverance hear,
Confess the covenant good,
And bless the ransom God hath found
In our Emanuel's blood.

3 Justice no more asserts its claim
Your forfeit lives to take;
But smiling mercy quick descends
Your heavy chains to break.

4 We walk at large, and sing the hand,
To which we freedom owe;
And drink those rivers with delight,
Which through this desart flow.

5 He, that hath liberty bestow'd,
Will give a kingdom too;
He, that hath loos'd the bonds of death,
The path of life will show.

CLXX. *The Fountain of Life.* Zechariah xiii. 1.

1 HAIL, everlasting spring!
Celestial fountain, hail!
Thy streams salvation bring,
The waters never fail:
Still they endure,
And still they flow
For all our woe
A sovereign cure.

2 Blest be his wounded side,
And blest his bleeding heart,
Who all in anguish died
Such favours to impart.
His sacred blood
Shall make us clean
From every sin,
And fit for God.

3 To that dear source of love
Our souls this day would come;
And thither from above,
Lord, call the nations home;
That Jew and Greek
With rapturous songs
On all their tongus
Thy praise may speak.

CLXXI. *God's Name profaned, when his Table is treated with Contempt.* Malachi i. 12.

APPLIED TO THE LORD'S-SUPPER.

1 MY God, and is thy table spread?
And does thy cup with love o'erflow?
Thither be all thy children led,
And let them all its sweetness know.

2 Hail sacred feast, which Jesus makes!
Rich banquet of his flesh and blood!
Thrice happy he, who here partakes
That sacred stream, that heavenly food!

3 Why are its dainties all in vain
Before unwilling hearts display'd?
Was not for you the victim slain?
Are you forbid the children's bread?

4 O let thy table honour'd be,
And furnish'd well with joyful guests;
And may each soul salvation see,
That here its sacred pledges tastes.

5 Let crouds approach with hearts prepar'd;
With hearts inflam'd let all attend;
Nor, when we leave our Father's board,
The pleasure, or the profit end.

6 Revive thy dying churches, Lord,
And bid our drooping graces live;
And more that energy afford,
A Saviour's blood alone can give.

CLXXII. *God's gracious Regard to active Attempts to revive Religion.* Malachi iii. 16, 17,

1 THE Lord on mortal worms looks down,
From his celestial throne;
And, when the wicked swarm around,
He well discerns his own.

2 He sees the tender hearts, that mourn
The scandals of the times;
And join their efforts to oppose
The wide-prevailing crimes.

3 Low to the social band he bows
His still-attentive ear;
And, while his angels sing around,
Delights their voice to hear.

4 The chronicles of heaven shall keep
Their words in transcript fair;

In the Redeemer's book of life
Their names recorded are.

5 "Yes", saith the Lord, "the world shall know
"These humble souls are mine:
"These, when my jewels I produce,
"Shall in full lustre shine.

6 "When deluges of fiery wrath
"My foes away shall bear,
"That hand, which strikes the wicked through,
"Shall all my children spare."

CLXXIII. *Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.* Malachi iv. 2.

1 TO thee, O God, we homage pay,
Source of the light that rules the day;
Who, while he gilds all nature's frame,
Reflects thy rays, and speaks thy name.

2 In louder strains we sing that grace,
Which gives the sun of righteousness;
Whose nobler light salvation brings,
And scatters healing from his wings.

3 Still on our hearts may Jesus shine
With beams of light and love divine;
Quicken'd by him our souls shall live,
And cheer'd by him shall grow and thrive.

4 O may his glories stand confess'd
From north to south, from east to west:
Successful may his gospel run
Wide as the circuit of the sun.

5 When shall that radiant scene arise,
When, fix'd on high in purer skies,
Christ all his lustre shall display
On all his saints through endless day?

# HYMNS

FOUNDED ON VARIOUS TEXTS IN THE

## NEW TESTAMENT.

### HYMN CLXXIV.

*The Axe laid to the Root of unfruitful Trees.* Matthew iii. 10.

1 THE Lord into his vineyard comes
Our various fruit to see;
His eye, more piercing than the light,
Examines every tree.

2 Tremble, ye sinners, at his frown,
If barren still ye stand;
And fear that keenly-wounding axe,
Which arms his awful hand.

3 Close to the root behold it laid,
To make destruction sure:
Who can resist the mighty stroke?
Or who the fire endure?

4 Lord, we adore thy sparing love,
Thy long-expecting grace:
Else had we low in ruin fall'n,
And known no more our place.

5 Succeeding years thy patience waits;
Nor let it wait in vain;
But form in us abundant fruit,
And still this fruit maintain.

### CLXXV. *The Light of good Examples, the most effectual Way to glorify God.* Matthew v. 16.

1 GREAT Teacher of thy church, we own
Thy precepts all divinely wise:
O may thy mighty power be shown
To fix them still before our eyes.

2 Deep on our hearts thy law engrave,
And fill our breasts with heavenly zeal,
That, while we trust thy power to save,
We may that sacred law fulfil.

3 Adorn'd with every heavenly grace,
May our examples brightly shine,
And the sweet lustre of thy face
Reflected, beam from each of thine.

4 These lineaments*, divinely fair,
Our heavenly Father shall proclaim;
And men, that view his image there,
Shall join to glorify his name.

CLXXVI. *Providential Bounties surveyed and improved.* Matthew v. 45.

1 FATHER of lights, we sing thy name,
Who kindledst up the lamp of day †;
Wide as he spreads his golden flame,
His beams thy power and love display.

2 Fountain of good, from thee proceed
The copious drops of genial ‡ rain;
Which through the hills, and through the meads
Revive the grass and swell the grain.

3 Through the wide world thy bounties spread;
Yet millions of our guilty race,
Though by thy daily bounty fed,
Affront thy law, and spurn thy grace.

4 Not so may our forgetful hearts,
O'erlook the tokens of thy care;
But, what thy liberal hand imparts,
Still own in praise, still ask in prayer.

5 So shall our suns more grateful shine,
And showers in sweeter drops shall fall,
When all our hearts and lives are thine,
And thou, our God, enjoy'd in all.

6 Jesus, our brighter sun, arise;
In plenteous showers thy Spirit send;
Earth then shall grow a paradise,
And in the heavenly Eden end.

CLXXVII. *Secret Prayer.* Matthew vi. 6.

1 FATHER divine, thy piercing eye
Shouts through the darkest night;
In deep retirement thou art nigh,
With heart-discerning sight.

2 There shall that piercing eye survey
My duteous homage paid,
With every morning's dawning ray,
And every evening's shade.

* Features. † The sun. ‡ Making fruitful.

3 O may thy own celestial fire
The incense still inflame;
While my warm vows to thee aspire,
Through my Redeemer's name.

4 So shall the visits of thy love,
My soul in secret bless;
So shalt thou deign in worlds above
Thy suppliant to confess.

CLXXVIII. *Seeking first the Kingdom of God, &c.* Matthew vi. 33.

1 NOW let a true ambition rise,
And ardour fire our breast,
To reign in worlds above the skies,
In heavenly glories drest.

2 Behold Jehovah's royal hand
A radiant crown display,
Whose gems with vivid lustre shine,
While stars and suns decay.

3 Away, each groveling anxious care,
Beneath a christian's thought;
I spring to seize immortal joys,
Which my Redeemer bought.

4 Ye hearts with youthful vigour warm,
The glorious prize pursue;
Nor shall ye want the goods of earth,
While heaven is kept in view.

CLXXIX. *Pardon spoken by Christ.* Matthew ix. 2.

1 MY Saviour, let me hear thy voice,
Pronounce these words of peace;
And all my warmest powers shall join
To celebrate the grace.

2 With gentle smiles call me thy child,
And speak my sins forgiven;
The accents mild shall charm mine ear,
All like the harps of heaven.

3 Cheerful, where'er thy hand shall lead,
The darkest path I'll tread;
Cheerful I'll quit these mortal shores,
And mingle with the dead.

4 When dreadful guilt is done away,
No other fears we know;
That hand, which scatters pardons down,
Shall crowns of life bestow.

CLXXX. *The relapsing Demoniac.* Matthew xii. 43—45.

1 SOVEREIGN of heaven, thine empire spreads
O'er all the worlds on high:
And at thy frown the infernal powers
In wild confusion fly.

2 Like lightning from his glittering throne
The great arch-traitor fell,
Driven with enormous ruin down
To infamy and hell.

3 Permitted now to range at large,
And traverse * earth and air;
O'er captive human souls he reigns,
And boasts his kingdom there.

4 Yet thence thy grace can drive him out
With one Almighty word;
O send thy potent sceptre forth,
And reign victorious, Lord.

5 Let wretched prisoners be releas'd
The smiling light to view;
Nor let the vanquish'd foe return
Their bondage to renew.

6 May grace complete that wondrous work,
Which thy own power begun,
And fill, from Satan's gloomy realms,
The kingdom of thy Son.

CLXXXI. *The Faith of the Syrophœnician Woman recommended.* Matthew xv. 26, 27.

1 ALL conquering faith, how high it rose,
When heaven itself might seem t' oppose!
All-gracious Lord, who didst appear
Most merciful, when most severe!

2 Thus at thy feet our souls would fall,
And loudly thus for mercy call;
"Thou Son of David, pity show,
"And save us from the infernal foe."

3 Though viler than the brutes we be,
Our longing eyes would wait on thee,
Who dost to dogs this grace afford,
To taste the crumbs beneath thy board.

* Wander through.

4 But thou the humble soul wilt raise,
And all its sorrows turn to praise:
Each self-abasing broken heart
Shall with thy children share a part.

CLXXXII. *The Church built on a Rock, and secured against the Gates of Hell.* Matthew xvi. 18.

1 NOW let the gates of Zion sing,
And challenge all her spiteful foes:
She triumphs in her Saviour-king,
In him, who from the dead arose.

2 He is the rock, on whom we rest,
And firm on that foundation stand;
Divine compassion fills his breast,
His word is sure, and strong his hand.

3 Hell and its hosts may rage in vain;
Vain are their counsels, and their power;
Grim death may marshal all his train,
And boast the conquest of an hour.

4 Breathless and pale his servants lie,
And know their former place no more
Their children raise his praises high,
And o'er their fathers' dust adore.

5 Their fathers' dust the Lord shall raise,
And burst the barriers of the grave;
Parents and children join his praise,
Who through eternity can save.

CLXXXIII. *Christ's Transfiguration.* Matthew xvii. 4.

1 WHEN at this distance, Lord, we trace
The various glories of thy face,
What transport pours o'er all our breast,
And charms our cares and woes to rest!

2 With thee in the obscurest cell
On some bleak mountain would I dwell,
Rather than pompous courts behold,
And share their grandeur and their gold.

3 Away, ye dreams of mortal joy!
Raptures divine my thoughts employ:
I see the king of glory shine;
And feel his love, and call him mine.

4 On Tabor * thus his servants view'd
His lustre, when transform'd he stood;

* The mountain on which Christ was transfigured.

And, bidding earthly scenes farewell,
Cried, "Lord, 'tis pleasant here to dwell."

5 Yet still our elevated eyes
To nobler visions long to rise;
That grand assembly would we join,
Where all thy saints around thee shine.

6 That mount how bright! those forms how fair!
'Tis good to dwell for ever there:
Come, death, dear envoy * of my God,
And bear me to that blest abode.

CLXXXIV. *The Grace of Christ in ministering to Men, and dying for them.* Matthew xx. 28.

1 SAVIOUR of men, and Lord of love,
How sweet thy gracious name!
With joy that errand we review,
On which thy mercy came.

2 While all thy own angelic bands
Stood waiting on the wing,
Charm'd with the honour to obey
The word of such a king;

3 For us mean wretched sinful men
Thou laid'st that glory by,
First in our mortal flesh to serve,
Then in that flesh to die.

4 Bought with thy service and thy blood,
We doubly, Lord, are thine;
To thee our lives we would devote,
To thee our death resign.

5 Blest man, who in thy cause consumes
His vigorous days with zeal!
Then with the last slow ebb of blood
Is call'd thy truth to seal!

CLXXXV. *Christ's compassionate Readiness to gather Souls.* Matthew xxiii. 37, 38.

1 SEE how the Lord of mercy spreads
His gentle hands abroad;
And warns us of the circling foes,
That thirst to drink our blood!

2 "Fly to the shelter of mine arms,
"And dwell secure from fear;
"Nor earth nor hell shall pluck you thence,
"Or reach, and wound you there."

* Messenger or ambassador.

3 With anxious heart the parent-bird
Thus calls her offspring round,
When horrid vultures beat the air,
And slaughter stains the ground.

4 The trembling brood, by nature taught,
Fly to the known retreat;
Beneath her downy wings are safe,
And find the shelter sweet.

5 But men, alas! more thoughtless men,
Refuse to lend an ear;
Their only refuge madly fly
And rather die, than hear.

6 They spurn the Saviour's offer'd grace,
Till they his wrath inflame;
Then desolation lays them low
In agony and shame.

CLXXXVI. *The Abounding of Iniquity, and Coldness of Christian Love.* Matthew xxiv. 12.

FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 ALAS for Britain, and her sons!
What hath she not to fear?
The sins, that ruin'd Salem once,
O how triumphant here!

2 Alas the strong o'erflowing tide!
How fiercely doth it rage!
And each foreboding symptom joins
In terrible presage.

3 Yet who hath eyes that can discern,
Or who an ear to hear?
Whose heart is trembling for the ark,
Or for his country dear?

4 Cold is the love of christian breasts,
If christian breasts remain;
And dying the last sparks of zeal,
Or its last efforts vain.

5 Of Britain, oft chastis'd and sav'd,
What shall the end be found?
Shall not the sword, that waves so long,
Inflict the deeper wound?

6 O stay thine arm, all-gracious God;
Thy Spirit largely pour!
He can the streams of guilt restrain,
And dying love restore.

CLXXXVII. *The final Sentence, and Happiness of the Righteous.* Matthew xxv. 34.

1 ATTEND mine ear; my heart rejoice;
While Jesus from his throne,
Begirt with all the angelic hosts,
Makes his last sentence known!

2 When sinners, cursed from his face,
To raging flames are driven,
His voice, with melody divine,
Thus calls his saints to heaven.

3 "Blest of my Father, all draw near,
"Receive the large reward;
"And rise with raptures to possess
"The kingdom love prepar'd.

4 "Ere earth's foundations first were laid,
"This sovereign purpose wrought,
"And rear'd those palaces divine,
"To which you now are brought.

5 "There shall you reign unnumber'd years,
"Protected by my power,
"While sin and hell, and pains and cares
"Shall vex your souls no more."

6 Come, dear majestic Saviour, come,
This jubilee proclaim,
And teach us accents fit to praise
So great, so dear a name.

CLXXXVIII. *Relieving Christ in his poor Saints.* Matthew xxv. 40.

1 JESUS, my Lord, how rich thy grace!
Thy bounties how complete!
How shall I count the matchless sum?
How pay the mighty debt?

2 High on a throne of radiant light
Dost thou exalted shine;
What can my poverty bestow,
When all the worlds are thine?

3 But thou hast brethren here below,
The partners of thy grace,
And wilt confess their humble names
Before thy Father's face.

4 In them thou may'st be cloath'd, and fed,
And visited, and cheer'd;
And in their accents of distress
My Saviour's voice is heard.

5 Thy face with reverence and with love
I in thy poor would see;
O rather let me beg my bread,
Than hold it back from thee!

CLXXXIX. *The final Sentence and Misery of the Wicked.* Matthew xxv. 41.

1 AND will the Judge descend?
And must the dead arise?
And not a single soul escape
His all-discerning eyes?

2 And from his righteous lips
Shall such a sentence sound?
And through the millions of the damn'd
Spread black despair around?

3 "Depart from me, accurs'd,
"To everlasting flame,
"For rebel-angels first prepar'd,
"Where mercy never came."

4 How will my heart endure
The terrors of that day,
When earth and heaven before his face
Astonish'd shrink away?

5 But ere that trumpet shakes
The mansions of the dead,
Hark from the gospel's gentle voice
What joyful tidings spread!

6 Ye sinners, seek his grace,
Whose wrath ye cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of his cross,
And find salvation there.

7 So shall that curse remove
By which the Saviour bled,
And the last awful day shall pour
His blessings on your head.

CXC. *Christ's Submission to his Father's Will.* Matthew xxvi. 42.

1 "FATHER divine," the Saviour cried,
While horrors press'd on every side,
And prostrate on the ground he lay,
"Remove this bitter cup away.

2 "But if these pangs must still be borne,
"Or helpless man be left forlorn,
"I bow my soul before thy throne,
"And say, Thy will, not mine be done."

3 Thus our submissive souls would bow,
And, taught by Jesus, lie as low;
Our hearts, and not our lips alone,
Would say, Thy will, not ours be done.

4 Then, though like him in dust we lie,
We'll view the blissful moment nigh,
Which, from our portion in his pains,
Calls to the joy in which he reigns.

CXCI. *Reflections on the Disciples forsaking Christ, when he was betrayed.* Matthew xxvi. 56.

1 BEHOLD the Son of God's delight;
His smiles how sweet! his rays how bright!
A friend of tenderness unknown:
To the last breath he lov'd his own.

2 But lo, his friends, his brethren dear
Fled, when they saw his danger near;
And not one generous heart remains
To shield his life, or share his pains.

3 So frail is man; so frail are we,
When unsupported, Lord, by thee;
Thus shrinks our faith; thus droops our love,
And thus our vows abortive prove.

4 Blest Jesus, thy own power impart,
And bind in cords of love my heart:
The fugitive no more shall flee,
But keep through death its hold on thee.

CXCII. *Christ's Complaint of his Father's forsaking him on the Cross.* Matthew xxvii. 46.

1 WHAT doleful accents do I hear?
What piercing cry invades mine ear?
Loaded with shame, and bath'd in blood,
Who calls to a forsaking God?

2 Amazing and heart-rending sight!
'Tis his own darling and delight,
Who once in his embraces lay,
Dearer than all the sons of day!

3 Yet when this Jesus died for me,
Distended on the cursed tree,
God stood afar, nor would afford
One pitying look, one cheering word.

4 What then, my soul, must thou have felt,
If press'd with all thy load of guilt,
Beneath whose weight the Saviour cries,
Who form'd the earth, and built the skies?

5 But in that dark tremendous hour
Unconquer'd faith exerts its power;
My God, my Father, cried aloud,
And heaven the endearing name avow'd.

6 From death, from earth, he rais'd his Son,
And gave him for his cross a throne;
Triumphant there the sufferer reigns,
And reaps the harvest of his pains.

7 Eternal raptures there are known;
Nor flows the joy on him alone,
But for his sake the Lord hath swore,
To leave the meanest saint no more.

CXCIII. *The same.* Matthew xxvii. 46.

1 MY Saviour, didst thou die for me?
For me send forth that bitter cry?
With bleeding heart thy wounds I see,
Prepar'd at thy command to die.

2 By all thine anguish on the cross,
When God thy Father stood afar,
Rich in thy temporary loss,
Thy church is brought for ever near.

3 From far the beamings of thy throne
Reviv'd my sympathizing heart;
Thy love made sinner's griefs thy own,
Mine in thy joys must take its part.

4 'Midst all the splendors of thy reign,
Think on the sorrows thou hast felt;
Nor let a mourner weep in vain,
For whom thy precious blood was spilt.

5 While through earth's darkest gloom I tread,
Dart to my soul a cheering ray;
And on the confines of the dead,
Thy power, as Lord of life, display.

CXCIV. *The Angel's Reply to the Women, that sought Christ.* Matthew xxviii. 5, 6.

1 YE humble souls, that seek the Lord,
Chase all your fears away:
And bow with pleasure down to see
The place where Jesus lay.

2 Thus low the Lord of life was brought;
Such wonders love can do;
Thus cold in death that bosom lay,
Which throbb'd, and bled for you.

3 A moment give a loose to grief;
Let grateful sorrows rise,
And wash the bloody stains away
With torrents from your eyes.

4 Then raise your eyes, and tune your songs,
The Saviour lives again;
Not all the bolts and bars of death
The conqueror could detain.

5 High o'er the angelic bands he rears
His once dishonour'd head;
And through unnumber'd years he reigns,
Who dwelt among the dead.

6 With joy like his shall every saint
His empty tomb survey;
Then rise with his ascending Lord
Through all his shining way.

CXCV. *Christ ever present with his Ministers and Churches.*
Matthew xxviii. 20.

1 WIDE o'er all worlds the Saviour reigns;
Unmov'd his power and love remains;
And on his arm his church shall rest.
Fair Zion, joyful in her King,
Through every changing age shall sing,
With his perpetual presence blest.

2 Tyrannic death, in vain thy rage,
Thy triumphs new in every age,
O'er the first heroes of his host;
Conscious of more than mortal aid,
Our bleeding hearts are not dismay'd,
But an immortal leader boast.

3 Though buried deep in dust they lie,
Whose tuneful voices rais'd on high
Led the sweet anthems to his name;
The children learn the fathers song,
And unform'd tongues shall still prolong
The ever-present Saviour's fame.

4 The present Saviour, he shall give
Millions of future saints to live,
And croud the temples of his grace:
The present Saviour, lo, he comes
To call whole legions from their tombs,
And teach their dust sublimer praise.

CXCVI. *Departed Saints asleep.* Mark v. 39.

1 "WHY flow these torrents of distress?"
The gentle Saviour cries,
"Why are my sleeping saints survey'd
"With unbelieving eyes?

2 "Death's feeble arm shall never boast,
"A friend of Christ is slain;
"Nor o'er their meaner part in dust
"A lasting power retain.

3 "I come, on wings of love I come,
"The slumbers to awake;
"My voice shall reach the deepest tomb,
"And all its bonds shall break.

4 "Touch'd by my hand in smiles they rise;
"They rise to sleep no more;
"But rob'd with light, and crown'd with joy
"To endless day they soar.

5 Jesus, our faith receives thy word;
And, though fond nature weep,
Grace learns to hail the pious dead,
And emulate their sleep.

6 Our willing souls thy summons wait
With them to rest and praise;
So let thy much-loved presence cheer
These separating days.

CXCVII. *The Struggle between Faith and Unbelief.* Mark ix. 24.

1 JESUS, our soul's delightful choice,
In thee believing we rejoice;
Yet still our joy is mix'd with grief,
While faith contends with unbelief.

2 Thy promises our hearts revive,
And keep our fainting hopes alive;
But guilt, and fears, and sorrows rise,
And hide the promise from our eyes.

3 O let not sin and satan boast,
While saints lie mourning in the dust;
Nor see that faith to ruin brought,
Which thy own gracious hand hath wrought.

4 Do thou the dying spark inflame;
Reveal the glories of thy name;
And put all anxious doubts to flight,
As shades dispers'd by opening light.

CXCVIII. *Christ's condescending Regard to little Children.* Mark x. 14.

1 SEE Israel's gentle Shepherd stand
With all-engaging charms;
Hark how he calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in his arms!

2 "Permit them to approach," he cries,
"Nor scorn their humble name;
"For 'twas to bless such souls as these,
"The Lord of angels came."

3 We bring them, Lord, in thankful hands,
And yield them up to thee;
Joyful, that we ourselves are thine,
Thine let our offspring be.

4 Ye little flock, with pleasure hear:
Ye children, seek his face;
And fly with transport to receive
The blessings of his grace.

5 If orphans they are left behind,
Thy guardian-care we trust:
That care shall heal our bleeding hearts,
If weeping o'er their dust.

CXCIX. *Christian Watchfulness.* Mark xiii. 37.

1 AWAKE, my drowsy soul, awake,
And view the threatening scene:
Legions of foes encamp around,
And treachery lurks within.

2 'Tis not this mortal life alone
These enemies assail;
All thine eternal hopes are lost,
If their attempts prevail.

3 Now to the work of God awake;
Behold thy master near;
The various arduous task pursue
With vigour and with fear.

4 The awful register goes on,
The account will surely come,
And opening day, or closing night
May bear me to my doom.

5 Tremendous thought! How deep it strikes!
Yet like a dream it flies,
Till God's own voice the slumbers chase
From these deluded eyes.

CC. *The Nativity of Christ.* Luke ii. 10—12.

1 HAIL, progeny* divine!
Hail, virgin's wondrous Son!
Who, for that humble shrine,
Didst quit the Almighty's throne:
The Infant-Lord
Our voices sing,
And be the king
Of grace ador'd.

2 Ye princes, disappear,
And boast your crowns no more;
Lay down your sceptres here,
And in the dust adore:
Where Jesus dwells,
The manger bare
In lustre far
Your pomp excels.

3 With Bethlehem's shepherds mild
The angels bow their head;
And round the sacred child
Their guardian-wings they spread;
They knew, that where
Their sovereign lies
In low disguise,
Heaven's court is there.

4 Thither, my soul, repair,
And early homage pay
To thy Redeemer fair,
As on his natal† day:
I kiss thy feet;
And, Lord, would be
A child like thee,
Whom thus I greet.

CCI. *The Angel's Song at Christ's Birth.* Luke ii. 13, 14.

1 HIGH let us swell our tuneful notes,
And join the angelic throng;
For angels no such love have known
To awake a cheerful song.

2 Good-will to sinful men is shewn,
And peace on earth is given;
For lo, the incarnate Saviour comes
With messages from heaven.

* Offspring. † Birth-day.

3 Justice and grace with sweet accord
His rising beams adorn;
Let heaven and earth in concert join,
Now such a child is born.

4 Glory to God in highest strains
In highest worlds be paid;
His glory by our lips proclaim'd,
And by our lives display'd.

5 When shall we reach those blissful realms,
Where Christ exalted reigns,
And learn of the celestial choir,
Their own immortal strains?

CCII. *Simeon's Song and Declaration to the Virgin Mary.* Luke ii. 30—35.

1 OUR eyes salvation see,
Prepar'd by grace divine:
How wide its splendors are diffus'd!
How bright its glories shine!

2 Through distant Heathen lands
It darts a vivid * ray,
And to the realms, where Satan reign'd,
Imparts celestial day.

3 The Israel of the Lord
In Christ their glory boast,
And on the honours of his name
Their whole salvation trust.

4 By him shall millions rise
To an immortal crown,
And millions, that his grace despise,
Shall sink in ruin down.

5 Our reckoning is begun,
And on the account will go,
Till clos'd in everlasting joy,
Or never-ending woe.

CCIII. *Christ's Message.* Luke iv. 18, 19.

1 HARK the glad sound! the Saviour comes!
The Saviour promis'd long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

2 On him the spirit largely pour'd
Exerts its sacred fire;

* Lively.

Wisdom and might, and zeal and love
His holy breast inspire.

3 He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

4 He comes from thickest films of vice
To clear the mental ray,
And on the eye-balls of the blind
To pour celestial day.

5 He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.

6 His silver trumpets publish loud
The jubilee of the Lord *;
Our debts are all remitted now,
Our heritage restor'd.

7 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim;
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With thy beloved name.

CCIV. *The recovered Dæmoniac, an Emblem of a converted Sinner.* Luke viii. 35.

1 JESUS, we own thy saving power,
And thy victorious hand;
Hell's legions tremble at thy feet,
And fly at thy command.

2 O'er souls, by passions uproar fill'd
With anarchy † unknown,
The nobler powers, restor'd by thee,
Ascend their peaceful throne.

3 No more they rend their cloathing off;
No more their wounds repeat;
But gentle and compos'd they wait
Attentive at thy feet.

4 O'er thousands more, where Satan rules,
May we such triumphs see;
And be their rescu'd souls and ours
Devoted, Lord, to thee.

* The acceptable year of the Lord, i. e. the year of jubilee. Levit. xxv.

† Confusion and disorder.

CCV. *The good Samaritan.* Luke x. 30—37.

1 FATHER of mercies, send thy grace
All-powerful from above,
To form in our obedient souls
The image of thy love.

2 O may our sympathising breasts
That generous pleasure know
Kindly to share in others joy,
And weep for others woe!

3 When the most helpless sons of grief
In low distress are laid,
Soft be our hearts their pains to feel,
And swift our hands to aid.

4 So Jesus look'd on dying men,
When thron'd above the skies,
And, 'midst the embraces of his God,
He felt compassion rise.

5 On wings of love the Saviour flew
To raise us from the ground,
And made the richest of his blood
A balm for every wound.

CCVI. *The Care of the Soul, the one Thing needful.* Luke x. 42.

1 WHY will ye lavish out your years
Amidst a thousand trifling cares?
While in this various range of thought
*The one thing needful* is forgot?

2 Why will ye chase the fleeting wind,
And famish an immortal mind;
While angels with regret look down
To see you spurn a heavenly crown?

3 The eternal God calls from above,
And Jesus pleads his bleeding love;
Awaken'd conscience gives you pain;
And shall they join their pleas in vain?

4 Not so your dying eyes shall view
Those objects, which ye now pursue;
Not so shall heaven and hell appear,
When the decisive hour is near.

5 Almighty God, thy power impart
To fix convictions on the heart;
Thy power unveils the blindest eyes,
And makes the haughtiest scorner wise.

CCVII. *Mary's Choice of the better Part.* Luke x. 42.

1 BESET with snares on every hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand:
Saviour divine, diffuse thy light
To guide my doubtful footsteps right.

2 Engage this roving treacherous heart
To fix on Mary's better part;
To scorn the trifles of a day
For joys, that none can take away.

3 Then let the wildest storms arise:
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck shall I fear,
But all my treasures with me bear.

4 If thou, my Jesus, still be nigh,
Cheerful I live, and joyful die:
Secure, when mortal comforts flee,
To find ten thousand worlds in thee.

CCVIII. *Christ's little Flock comforted with the Views of a Kingdom.* Luke xii. 32.

1 YE little flock, whom Jesus feeds,
Dismiss your anxious cares;
Look to the Shepherd of your souls,
And smile away your fears.

2 Though wolves and lions prowl around,
His staff is your defence:
'Midst sands and rocks your shepherd's voice
Calls streams and pastures thence.

3 Your Father will a kingdom give,
And give it with delight;
His feeblest child his love shall call
To triumph in his sight.

4 Ten thousand praises, Lord, we bring
For sure supports like these:
And o'er the pious dead we sing
Thy living promises.

5 For all we hope, and they enjoy,
We bless a Saviour's name;
Nor shall that stroke disturb the song,
Which breaks this mortal frame.

CCIX. *Providing Bags that wax not old, &c.* Luke xii. 33.

1 THESE mortal joys, how soon they fade!
How swift they pass away!

The dying flower reclines its head,
The beauty of a day!

2 The bags are rent, the treasures lost,
We fondly call'd our own:
Scarce could we the possession boast,
And strait we found it gone.

3 But there are joys that cannot die,
Which God laid up in store;
Treasure beyond the changing sky,
Brighter than golden ore.

4 To that my rising heart aspires,
Secure to find its rest,
And glories in such wide desires
Of all their wish possess'd.

5 The seeds, which piety and love
Have scatter'd here below,
In the fair fertile fields above
To ample harvests grow.

6 The mite my willing hands can give
At Jesus' feet I lay;
Grace shall the humble gift receive,
And heaven at large repay.

CCX. *The active Christian.* Luke xii. 35—38.

1 YE servants of the Lord,
Each in his office wait,
Observant of his heavenly word,
And watchful at his gate.

2 Let all your lamps be bright,
And trim the golden flame;
Gird up your loins, as in his sight,
For awful is his name.

3 Watch, 'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak, he's near:
Mark the first signal of his hand,
And ready all appear.

4 O happy servant he
In such a posture found!
He shall his Lord with rapture see,
And be with honour crown'd.

5 Christ shall the banquet spread
With his own royal hand,
And raise that favourite servant's head
Amidst the angelic band.

CCXI. *Room at the Gospel-Feast.* Luke xiv. 22.

1 THE King of heaven his table spreads,
And dainties crown the board;
Not paradise with all its joys
Could such delight afford.

2 Pardon and peace to dying men,
And endless life are given,
And the rich blood, that Jesus shed
To raise the soul to heaven.

3 Ye hungry poor, that long have stray'd
In sin's dark mazes, come:
Come from the hedges and highways,
And grace shall find you room.

4 Millions of souls in glory now
Were fed and feasted here;
And millions more, still on the way,
Around the board appear.

5 Yet is his house and heart so large,
That millions more may come;
Nor could the wide assembling world
O'er-fill the spacious room.

6 All things are ready; come away,
Nor weak excuses frame;
Crowd to your places at the feast,
And bless the founder's name.

CCXII. *The present and future State of the Saint and Sinner compared.* Luke xvi. 25.

1 IN what confusion earth appears!
God's dearest children bath'd in tears!
While they, who heaven itself deride,
Riot in luxury and pride.

2 But patient let my soul attend,
And, ere I censure, view the end:
That end, how different! who can tell
The wide extremes of heaven and hell?

3 See the red flames around him twine,
Who did in gold and purple shine!
Nor can his tongue one drop obtain
To allay the scorching of his pain.

4 While round the saint, so poor below,
Full rivers of salvation flow;
On Abraham's breast he leans his head,
And banquets on celestial bread.

5 Jesus, my Saviour, let me share
The meanest of thy servants' fare ;
May I at last approach to taste
The blessings of thy marriage-feast.

CCXIII. *Rebels against Christ executed.* Luke xix. 27.

1 HE comes ; the royal conqueror comes ;
His legions fill the sky ;
Angelic trumpets rend the tombs,
And loud proclaim him nigh.

2 Ye rebel hosts, how vain your rage
Against this sovereign Lord !
What madness bears you on to engage
The terrors of his sword ?

3 " Bring forth," he cries, " those sons of pride,
" That scorn'd my gentle sway,
" To prove the arm they once defy'd
" Omnipotent to slay."

4 Tremendous scene of wrath divine !
How wide the vengeance spreads :
His pointed darts of lightning shine
Round their defenceless heads.

5 Now let the rebels seek that face,
From which they cannot flee !
And thou, my soul, adore the grace,
That sweetly conquer'd thee.

CCXIV. *The Redeemer's Tears wept over lost Souls.* Luke xix. 41, 42.

1 WHAT venerable sight appears ?
The son of God dissolv'd in tears !
Trace, O my soul, with sad surprise,
The sorrows of a Saviour's eyes.

2 For whom, blest Jesus, we would know,
Doth such a sacred torrent flow ?
What brother, or what friend of thine,
Is grac'd and mourn'd with drops divine :

3 Nor brother there, nor friend I see,
But sons of pride and cruelty ;
Who like rapacious tigers stood
Insatiate panting for thy blood.

4 Dear Lord, and did thy gushing eyes
Thus stream o'er dying enemies ?
And can thy tenderness forget
The sinner humbled at thy feet ?

5 With deep remorse our bowels move,
That we have wrong'd such matchless love;
Thy gentle pity, Lord, display,
And smile these trembling fears away.

6 Give us to shine before thy face,
Eternal trophies of thy grace;
Where songs of praise thy saints employ,
And mingle with a Saviour's joy.

CCXV. *Departed Saints living to God.* Luke xx. 38.

1 THRICE happy state, where saints shall live
Around their Father's throne,
In every joy, that heaven can give,
And live to God alone!

2 Unnumber'd bands of kindred minds,
That dwelt in feeble clay,
Us and our woes have left behind
To reign in endless day.

3 Immortal vigour now they breathe,
And all the air is peace;
They chide our tears, that mourn the death,
Which brought their souls release.

4 Thus shall the grace of Christ prevail,
Till all his chosen meet;
And not the meanest servant fail
His household to complete.

5 To that blest goal * with ardent haste
Our active souls would tend;
Nor feel their sorrows, as they pass'd
To such a blissful end.

CCXVI. *Christ's Admonition to, and Care of Peter under approaching Trials.* Luke xxii. 31, 32.

1 HOW keen the tempter's malice is!
How artful, and how great!
Though not one grain shall be destroy'd,
Yet will he sift the wheat.

2 But God can all his power controul,
And gather in his chain;
And, where he seems to triumph most,
The captive soul regain.

3 There is a Shepherd kind and strong,
Still watchful for his sheep;

* The end of a race, where the prize was hung.

Nor shall the infernal lion rend,
Whom he vouchsafes to keep.

4 Blest Jesus, intercede for us,
That we may fall no more;
O raise us, when we prostrate lie,
And comfort lost restore.

5 Thy secret energy impart,
That faith may never fail;
But, 'midst whole showers of fiery darts,
That temper'd shield prevail.

6 Secur'd ourselves by grace divine,
We'll guard our brethren too;
And, taught their frailty by our own,
Our care of them renew.

CCXVII. *Christ's Prayer for his Enemies.* Luke xxiii. 34.

1 ALOUD I sing the wondrous grace,
Christ to his murderers bare;
Which made the tottering cross its throne,
And hung its trophies there.

2 Father, forgive, his mercy cried
With his expiring breath,
And drew eternal blessings down
On those, who wrought his death.

3 Then may I hope for pardon too,
Though I have pierc'd the Lord;
Blest Jesus, in my favour speak
That all-prevailing word.

4 I knew not what my madness did,
While I remain'd thy foe:
Soon as I saw the wounds were thine,
My tears began to flow.

5 Melted by goodness so divine,
I would its footsteps trace;
And, while beneath thy cross I stand,
My fiercest foes embrace.

CCXVIII. *The Resurrection of Christ.* Luke xxiv. 34.

1 YES, the Redeemer rose;
The Saviour left the dead;
And o'er our hellish foes
High rais'd his conquering head:
In wild dismay
The guards around
Fell to the ground,
And sunk away.

2 Lo, the angelic bands
In full assembly meet,
To wait his high commands,
And worship at his feet:
Joyful they come,
And wing their way
From realms of day
To such a tomb.

3 Then back to heaven they fly,
And the glad tidings bear:
Hark! as they soar on high,
What music fills the air!
Their anthems say,
"Jesus who bled
"Hath left the dead;
He rose to-day."

4 Ye mortals, catch the sound,
Redeem'd by him from hell;
And send the echo round
The globe on which you dwell;
Transported cry,
"Jesus who bled
"Hath left the dead
"No more to die."

5 All-hail, triumphant Lord,
Who sav'st us with thy blood!
Wide be thy name ador'd,
Thou rising, reigning God!
With thee we rise,
With thee we reign,
And empires gain
Beyond the skies.

CCXIX. *The Gospel first preached at Jerusalem.* Luke xxiv. 47.

1 "GO, saith the Lord, proclaim my grace
"To all the sons of Adam's race,
"Pardon for every crimson sin,
"And at Jerusalem begin.

2 "There, where my blood, not fully dry,
"Stands warm upon mount Calvary;
"That blood shall purge away their guilt,
"By whom so lately it was spilt.

3 "Now let the daring rebels turn,
"And o'er their bleeding Sovereign mourn;
"Their bleeding Sovereign shall forgive,
"And bid the rebels look and live."

4 Is this thy voice, all-gracious Lord?
And did the rebels hear thy word?
And did they fall beneath thy feet,
And on their knees forgiveness meet?

5 Then may I hope for mercy too;
Such love can my hard heart subdue,
And give this guilty soul a place
Among the captives of thy grace.

6 Here be it daily mine employ
To bathe thy wounds with tears of joy,
Till 'midst the new Jerusalem
In one full choir we sing thy name.

CCXX. *God's Love to the World in sending Christ for its Redemption.* John iii. 16.

1 SING to the Lord a new melodious song:
Assist the choir, ye tribes of every tongue:
Wide as the world his sovereign mercy reigns;
Wide as the world resound the rapturous strains.
Ye angels, join the joyful acclamation,
And sing the love, that brings to men salvation.

2 His gracious eye beheld in full survey
Where Adam's race in mingled ruin lay:
No human aid the danger could avert:
No angel's hand could soothe the raging smart:
In his own breast divine compassion rises,
And the grand scheme the court of heaven surprises.

3 God's only son with peerless * glories bright,
His Father's fairest image and delight,
Justice and grace the victim have decreed,
To wear our flesh, and in that flesh to bleed.
Prostrate in dust, ye sinners, all adore him,
And tremble, while your hearts rejoice before him.

4 The wonderous work is done; the covenant stood,
And Jesus expiates human guilt with blood;
Nail'd to the tree he bows his sacred head;
A mangled corpse he sojourns with the dead;
Rising, the gospel sends through every nation;
Sinners believe, and gain complete salvation.

5 Father of Grace, accept our humble praise;
O let it run through everlasting days!
And thou, blest Saviour, spotless Lamb of God,
Accept the souls dear-ransom'd with thy blood;
And to those songs, form all our feeble voices;
In which the choir round thy bright throne rejoices.

* Unequalled.

CCXXI. *The Spirit's Influences compared to living Water.* John iv. 10.

1 BLEST Jesus, source of grace divine,
What soul-refreshing streams are thine!
O bring these healing waters nigh,
Or we must droop, and fall, and die.

2 No traveller through desart lands,
'Midst scorching suns, and burning sands,
More eager longs for cooling rain,
Or pants the current to obtain.

3 Our longing souls aloud would sing,
Spring up, celestial fountain, spring;
To a redundant river flow,
And cheer this thirsty land below.

4 May this blest torrent near my side
Through all the desart gently glide;
Then in Emanuel's land above
Spread to a sea of joy and love.

CCXXII. *The Christian's secret Feast.* John iv. 32.

1 WE praise the Lord for heavenly bread,
With which immortal souls are fed:
We praise thee for that heavenly feast,
Which Jesus with delight could taste.

2 He, while he sojourn'd here below,
Had meat, which strangers could not know:
That meat he to his people gives,
And he that tastes the banquet lives.

3 So let me live, sustain'd by grace,
Regal'd with fruits of righteousness:
Enter my heart, all-gracious Lord,
And sup with me, and deck thy board.

4 Devotion, faith, and zealous love,
And hope, that bears the soul above,
Be these my dainties, till I rise,
And taste the joys of paradise.

CCXXIII. *The Paralytic at Bethesda.* John v. 6.

1 BEHOLD the great physician stands,
Whose skill is ever sure;
And loud he calls to dying men,
And free he offers cure.

2 And will ye hear his gracious voice,
While sore diseas'd ye lie?
Or will ye all his grace despise,
And trifle till ye die?

3 Blest Jesus, speak the healing word,
And inward vigour give;
Then, rais'd by energy divine,
Shall helpless mortals live.

4 With cheerful pace our trembling feet
In thy blest paths shall run,
Till Zion's healthful hill they gain,
Where no complaint is known.

CCXXIV. *God's Purposes effectual, and Christ's Invitations sincere.* John vi. 37.

1 IS there a sight in earth or heaven
Can such delight impart,
As Jesus' wide-extended arms
And softly-melting heart?

2 "All that my heavenly Father gives
"Shall come," the Saviour cries,
"And every weakest soul, that comes,
"Find favour in mine eyes.

3 "I'll not reject him with disdain,
"Nor hurl him down to hell;
"But, folded in my kind embrace,
"He safe and blest shall dwell."

4 Hearken, ye dying sinners all;
All hasten, while ye hear;
For crouds of wretched souls at once
May find their refuge there.

5 I hear thy voice, and I obey;
Low at thy feet I fall;
Nor shall the tempter's voice prevail
Against the Saviour's call.

CCXXV. *Christ's Invitation to thirsty Souls.* John vii. 37.

1 THE Lord of life exalted stands,
Aloud he cries, and spreads his hands:
He calls ten thousand sinners round,
And sends a voice from every wound.

2 "Attend, ye thirsty souls draw near,
"And satiate all your wishes here:
"Behold the living fountain flows
"In streams as various as your woes.

3 "An ample pardon here I give,
"And bid the sentenc'd rebel live,
"Shew him my Father's smiling face,
"And lodge him in his dear embrace.

4 " I purge from sin's detested stain,
" And make the crimson white again,
" Lead to celestial joys refin'd,
" And lasting as the deathless mind.

5 " Must I anew my pity prove ?
" Witness the words of melting love,
" The gushing tear, the labouring breath,
" And all these scars of bleeding death."

6 Blest Saviour, I can doubt no more ;
I hear, and wonder, and adore :
Panting I seek that fountain-head,
Whence waters so divine proceed.

7 Clear spring of life, flow on, and roll
With growing swell from pole to pole,
Till flowers and fruits of paradise
Round all the winding current rise.

8 Still near my stream may I be found,
Long as I tread this earthly ground ;
Cheer with thy wave death's gloomy shade,
Then through the fields of Canaan spread.

CCXXVI. *True Liberty given by Christ.* John viii. 36.

1 HARK ! for 'tis God's own son that calls
To life and liberty ;
Transported fall before his feet,
Who makes the prisoners free.

2 The cursed bonds of sin he breaks,
And breaks old Satan's chain :
Smiling he deals those pardons round,
Which free from endless pain.

3 Into the captive heart he pours
His Spirit from on high ;
We lose the terrors of the slave,
And Abba, Father, cry.

4 Shake off your bonds, and sing his grace ;
The sinner's friend proclaim;
And call on all around to seek
True freedom by his name.

5 Walk on at large, till you attain
Your Father's house above ;
There shall you wear immortal crowns,
And sing redeeming love.

CCXXVII. *The same.* John viii. 36.

1 AND shall we still be slaves,
And in our fetters lie,
When summon'd by a voice divine
To assert our liberty?

2 Did the great Saviour bleed
Our freedom to obtain,
That we should trample on his blood,
And glory in our chain?

3 Alas, the sordid mind!
How all its powers are broke!
Proud of a tyrant's haughty sway,
And practis'd to the yoke!

4 Divine Redeemer, hear,
Thy sovereign power impart,
And let thy generous spirit wake
True ardour in our heart.

5 Then shall the sons of death,
That in the dungeon lie,
Spring to the throne of pardoning grace,
And Abba, father, cry

CCXXVIII. *Christ the Door.* John x. 9.

1 AWAKE, our souls, and bless his name,
Whose mercies never fail;
Who opens wide a door of hope
In Achor's gloomy vale *.

2 Behold the portal wide display'd,
The buildings strong and fair;
Within are pastures fresh and green,
And living streams are there.

3 Enter, my soul, with cheerful haste,
For Jesus is the door;
Nor fear the serpent's wily arts,
Nor fear the lion's roar.

4 O may thy grace the nations lead,
And Jews and Gentiles come,
All travelling through one beauteous gate
To one eternal home.

* Hosea ii. 15.

CCXXIX. *Abundant Life by Christ our Shepherd.* John x. 10.

1 PRAISE to our Shepherd's gracious name,
Who on so kind an errand came;
Came, that by him his flock might live,
And more abundant life receive.

2 Hail, great Emanuel from above,
High seated on thy throne of love!
O pour the vital torrent down,
Thy people's joy, their Lord's renown.

3 Scarce half alive we sigh and cry;
Scarce raise to thee our languid eye;
Kind Saviour, let our dying state
Compassion in thy heart create.

4 The Shepherd's blood the sheep must heal;
O may we all its influence feel;
Till inward deep experience show,
Christ can begin a heaven below.

CCXXX. *Christ's Sheep described.* John x. 27.

1 THY flock, with what a tender care,
Blest Jesus, dost thou keep?
Fain would my weak, my wandering soul
Be number'd with thy sheep.

2 Gentle and tractable and plain
My heart would ever be,
Averse to harm, propense to help,
And faithful still to thee.

3 The gentle accents of thy voice
My listening soul would hear;
And, by the signals of thy will,
I all my course would steer.

4 I follow where my Shepherd leads,
And mark the path he drew;
My Shepherd's feet mount Zion tread,
And I shall reach it too.

CCXXXI. *The Happiness and Security of Christ's Sheep.* John x. 28.

1 MY soul, with joy attend,
While Jesus silence breaks;
No angel's harp such music yields,
As what my Shepherd speaks.

2 "I know my sheep," he cries,
"My soul approves them well:

" Vain is the treacherous world's disguise,
" And vain the rage of hell.

3 " I freely feed them now
" With tokens of my love,
" But richer pastures I prepare,
" And sweeter streams above.

4 " Unnumber'd years of bliss
" I to my sheep will give;
" And, while my throne unshaken stands,
" Shall all my chosen live.

5 " This tried Almighty hand
" Is rais'd for their defence:
" Where is the power shall reach them there?
" Or what shall force them thence?"

6 Enough, my gracious Lord,
Let faith triumphant cry;
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die.

CCXXXII. *Christ's Sheep given by the Father, and guarded by Omnipotence.* John x. 29, 30.

1 IN one harmonious cheerful song,
Ye happy saints, combine;
Loud let it sound from every tongue,
The Saviour is divine.

2 The least, the feeblest of the sheep
To him the father gave;
Kind is his heart the charge to keep,
And strong his arm to save.

3 In Christ the almighty Father dwells,
And Christ and he are one;
The rebel power, which Christ assails,
Attacks the eternal throne.

4 That hand, which heaven and earth sustains,
And bars the gates of hell,
And rivets Satan down in chains,
Shall guard his chosen well.

5 Now let the infernal lion roar,
How vain his threats appear!
When he can match Jehovah's power,
I will begin to fear.

CCXXXIII. *The attractive Influence of a crucified Saviour.* John xii. 32.

1 BEHOLD the amazing sight,
The Saviour lifted high!

Behold the Son of God's delight
Expire in agony!

2 For whom, for whom, my heart,
Were all these sorrows borne?
Why did he feel that piercing smart,
And meet that various scorn?

3 For love of us he bled,
And all in torture died:
'Twas love, that bow'd his fainting head,
And op'd his gushing side.

4 I see, and I adore
In sympathy of love:
I feel the strong attractive power
To lift my soul above.

5 Drawn by such cords as these,
Let all the earth combine
With cheerful ardour to confess
The energy divine.

6 In thee our hearts unite,
Nor share thy griefs alone,
But from thy cross pursue their flight
To thy triumphant throne.

CCXXXIV. *Christ's mysterious Conduct to be unfolded hereafter.*
John xiii. 7.

1 JESUS, we own thy sovereign hand,
Thy faithful care we own;
Wisdom and love are all thy ways,
When most to us unknown.

2 By thee the springs of life were form'd,
And by thy breath are broke,
And good is every awful word,
Our gracious Lord hath spoke.

3 To thee we yield our comforts up,
To thee our lives resign;
In straits and dangers rich and safe,
If we and ours are thine.

4 Thy saints in earlier life remov'd,
In sweeter accents sing;
And bless the swiftness of their flight,
That bore them to their King.

5 The burdens of a lengthen'd day
With patience we would bear;
Till evening's welcome hour shall shew
We were our Master's care.

CCXXXV. *Christ's Pity and Consolation for his troubled Disciples.*
John xiv. 1—3.

1 PEACE, all ye sorrows of the heart,
And all my tears be dry;
That christian ne'er can be forlorn,
That views his Jesus nigh.

2 "Let not your bosoms throb," he says,
"Nor be your souls afraid:
"Trust in your God's Almighty name,
"And trust your Saviour's aid.

3 "Fair mansions in my Father's house
"For all his children wait;
"And I, your elder brother, go
"To open wide the gate.

4 "And if I thither go before,
"A dwelling to prepare,
"I surely shall return again,
"That I may fix you there.

5 "United in eternal love,
"My chosen shall remain,
"And with rejoicing hearts shall share
"The honours of my reign."

6 Yes, Lord; thy gracious words we hear,
And cordial joys they bring:
Frail nature may extort a groan,
But faith shall learn to sing.

CCXXXVI. *The Christian's Life connected with that of Christ.*
John xiv. 19.

1 THE covenant of a Saviour's love
Shall stand for ever good,
And thus his life shall guard the souls
He purchas'd with his blood.

2 "I live for ever," saith the Lord,
"And you shall therefore live;
"Receive with pleasure every pledge
"My power and love can give."

3 We own the promise, prince of grace,
Though earthly helpers die;
And animate our fainting hearts,
While Christ our friend is nigh.

4 The king of fears can do no more
Than stop our mortal breath;
But Jesus gives a nobler life,
That cannot yield to death.

CCXXXVII. *Abiding in Christ necessary to our Fruitfulness.* John xv. 4.

1 LORD of the vineyard, we adore
That power and grace divine,
Which plants our wild, our barren souls
In Christ the living vine.

2 For ever may they there abide,
And, from that vital root,
Be influence spread through every branch,
To form and feed the fruit.

3 Shine forth, my God, the clusters warm
With rays of sacred love;
Till Eden's soil, and Zion's streams
The generous plant improve.

CCXXXVIII. *Our Prayers effectual, when we abide in Christ, and his Word abideth in us.* John xv. 7.

1 HAIL, gracious Saviour, all-divine!
Mysterious, ever-living vine!
To thee united may we live,
And nourish'd by thine influence thrive.

2 Still may our souls in thee abide,
Torn by no tempests from thy side;
Nor from its place within our heart
Thy promise, or thy law depart.

3 Then shall our prayers accepted rise,
Through thee a grateful sacrifice;
And all our sighs before thy throne
Descend in ample blessings down.

4 In silent hope our souls shall wait
Their pension from thy mercy's gate;
Nor can our lips or hearts express
A wish proportion'd to thy grace.

CCXXXIX. *Continuing in Christ's Love.* John xv. 9.

1 TO all his flock, what wondrous love
Doth our kind Shepherd bear!
As he to his great Father's heart,
So we to his are dear.

2 So sure, so constant, and so strong
Do his endearments prove:

O may their energy prevail
To fix us in his love.

3 No more let my divided heart
From this blest centre turn;
But, fir'd by such all-potent rays,
With flames immortal burn.

4 Descend, and all thy power display,
And all thy love reveal;
That the warm streams of Jesus' blood
This frozen heart may feel.

CCXL. *The Apostles and Christians chosen by Christ to bring forth permanent Fruit.* John xv. 16.

1 I OWN, my God, thy sovereign grace,
And bring the praise to thee;
If thou my chosen portion art,
Thou first hast chosen me.

2 My gracious counsellor and guide
Will hear me when I pray;
Nor, while I urge a Saviour's name,
Will frown my soul away.

3 Blest Jesus, animate my heart
With beams of heavenly love,
And teach that cold unthankful soil
The heavenly seed to improve.

4 In copious showers thy spirit send
To water all the ground;
So to the honour of thy name
Shall lasting fruit be found.

CCXLI. *Peace in Christ amidst Tribulations.* John xvi. 33.

1 HENCEFORTH let each believing heart
From anxious sorrows cease:
Though storms of trouble rage around,
In Jesus we have peace.

2 His blood from wrath to come redeems,
And his Almighty grace,
By bitterest draughts of deep distress,
Its healing power displays.

3 Jesus, our captain, march'd before
To lead us to the fight;
And now he reacheth out the crown
With heavenly glories bright.

4 Lord, 'tis enough, thy voice we hear ;
That crown'd by faith we see :
No sorrows shall o'erwhelm our souls,
Since none divide from thee.

CCXLII. *Christ sanctifying himself, that his People may be sanctified.* John xvii. 19.

1 BEHOLD the bleeding Lamb of God,
Our spotless sacrifice !
By hands of barbarous sinners seiz'd,
Nail'd to the cross he dies.

2 Blest Jesus, whence this streaming blood ?
And whence this foul disgrace ?
Whence all these pointed thorns, that rend
Thy venerable face ?

3 " I sanctify myself," he cries,
" That thou may'st holy be ;
" Come trace my life ; come, view my death,
" And learn to copy me."

4 Dear Lord, we pant for holiness,
And inbred sin we mourn :
To the bright path of thy commands
Our wandering footsteps turn.

5 Not more sincerely would we wish
To climb the heavenly hill,
Than here with all our utmost power
Thy model to fulfil.

CCXLIII. *Meditations on the Sepulchre in the Garden.* John xix. 41.

1 THE sepulchres, how thick they stand
Through all the road on either hand !
And burst upon the starting sight
In every garden of delight !

2 Thither the winding alleys tend ;
There all the flowery borders end ;
And forms, that charm'd the eyes before,
Fragrance and music are no more.

3 Deep in the damp and silent cell
My fathers, and my brethren dwell ;
Beneath its broad and gloomy shade
My kindred, and my friends are laid.

4 But, while I tread the solemn way,
My faith that Saviour would survey,
Who deign'd to sojourn in the tomb,
And left behind a rich perfume.

5 My thoughts with ecstasy unknown,
While from his grave they view his throne,
Through my own sepulchre can see
A paradise reserv'd for me.

CCXLIV. *Christ ascending to his Father and God, and ours.* John xx. 17.

1 IN raptures let our hearts ascend
Our heavenly seats to view,
And grateful trace that shining path
Our rising Saviour drew.

2 "Up to my Father, and my God,
"I go;" the conqueror cries,
"Up to your Father, and your God,
"My brethren, lift your eyes."

3 And doth the Lord of glory call
Such worms his brethren dear?
And doth he point to heaven's high throne,
And shew our Father there?

4 And doth he teach my sinful lips
That tuneful sound, my God?
And breathe his Spirit on my heart
To shed his grace abroad?

5 O world, produce a good like this,
And thou shalt have my love;
Till then, my Father claims it all,
And Christ, who dwells above.

6 Dear Jesus, call this willing soul,
That struggles with its clay;
And fain would leave this weary load
To wing its airy way.

CCXLV. *The Disciples' Joy at Christ's Appearance to them after his Resurrection.* John xx. 19, 20.

1 COME, our indulgent Saviour, come,
Illustrious conqueror o'er the tomb:
Here thine assembled servants bless,
And fill our hearts with sacred peace.

2 O come thyself, most gracious Lord,
With all the joy thy smiles afford;
Reveal the lustre of thy face,
And make us feel thy vital grace.

3 With rapture kneeling round we greet
Thy pierced hands, thy wounded feet;
And from the scar, that marks thy side,
We see our life's warm torrent glide.

4 Enter our hearts, Redeemer blest;
Enter, thou ever-honour'd guest,
Not for one transient hour alone,
But there to fix thy lasting throne.

5 Own this mean dwelling as thy home;
And, when our life's last hour is come,
Let us but die, as in thy sight,
And death shall vanish in delight.

CCXLVI. *Appeal to Christ for the Sincerity of Love to him.* John xxi. 15.

1 DO not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see;
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee.

2 Do not I love thee from my soul?
Then let me nothing love!
Dead be my heart to every joy,
When Jesus cannot move.

3 Is not thy name melodious still
To mine attentive ear?
Doth not each pulse with pleasure bound
My Saviour's voice to hear?

4 Hast thou a lamb in all thy flock,
I would disdain to feed?
Hast thou a foe, before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?

5 Would not mine ardent spirit vie *
With angels round the throne,
To execute thy sacred will,
And make thy glory known.

6 Would not my heart pour forth its blood
In honour of thy name,
And challenge the cold hand of death
To damp the immortal flame?

7 Thou know'st I love thee, dearest Lord:
But O! I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love thee more.

CCXLVII. *Zeal for the Cause of Christ; or Peter and John following their Master.* John xxi. 18—20 †.

1 BLEST men, who stretch their willing hands,
Submissive to their Lord's commands,

* Endeavour to equal. † See Family Expositor in Loc.

And yield their liberty and breath
To him, that lov'd their souls in death!

2 Lead me to suffer, and to die,
If thou, my gracious Lord, art nigh:
One smile from thee my heart shall fire,
And teach me smiling to expire.

3 If nature at the trial shake,
And from the cross or flames draw back,
Grace can its feeble courage raise,
And turn its tremblings into praise.

4 While scarce I dare, with Peter, say,
"I'll boldly tread the bleeding way;"
Yet in thy steps, like John, I'd move
With humble hope, and silent love.

CCXLVIII. *Christ exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour.* Acts v. 31.

1 EXALTED Prince of life, we own
The royal honours of thy throne:
'Tis fix'd by God's Almighty hand,
And seraphs bow at thy command.

2 Exalted Saviour, we confess
The sovereign triumphs of the grace;
Where beams of gentle radiance shine,
And temper majesty divine.

3 Wide thy resistless sceptre sway,
Till all thine enemies obey:
Wide may thy cross its virtue prove,
And conquer millions by its love.

4 Mighty to vanquish, and forgive!
Thine Israel shall repent and live;
And loud proclaim thy healing breath,
Which works their life, who wrought thy death.

CCXLIX. *The Believer committing his departing Spirit to Jesus.* Acts vii. 59.

1 O Thou, that hast redemption wrought,
Patron of souls, thy blood hath bought,
To thee our spirits we commit,
Mighty to rescue from the pit.

2 Millions of blissful souls above,
In realms of purity and love,
With praise of endless songs proclaim
The honours of thy faithful name.

3 When all the powers of nature fail'd,
Thy ever-constant care prevail'd;

Courage and joy thy friendship spoke,
When every mortal bond was broke.

4 We on that friendship, Lord, repose,
The healing balm of all our woes;
And we, when sinking in the grave,
Trust thine omnipotence to save.

5 O! may our spirits by thy hand
Be gather'd to that happy band,
Who, 'midst the blessings of thy reign,
Lose all remembrance of their pain!

6 In raptures there divinely sweet
Give us our kindred souls to meet,
And wait with them that brighter day,
Which all thy triumph shall display.

CCL. *Peter's Admonition to Simon Magus.* Acts viii. 21—24.

1 SEARCHER of hearts, before thy face
I all my soul display;
And, conscious of its innate * arts,
Intreat thy strict survey.

2 If lurking in its inmost folds
I any sin conceal,
O let a ray of light divine
The secret guile reveal.

3 If tinctur'd with that odious gall
Unknowing I remain,
Let grace, like a pure silver stream,
Wash out th' accursed stain.

4 If in these fatal fetters bound
A wretched slave I lie,
Smite off my chains, and wake my soul
To light and liberty.

5 To humble penitence and prayer
Be gentle pity given;
Speak ample pardon to my heart,
And seal its claim to heaven.

CCLI. *The Descent of the Spirit; or his Influences desired.* Acts x. 44.

1 GREAT Father of each perfect gift,
Behold thy servants wait;
With longing eyes and lifted hands,
We flock around thy gate.

2 O shed abroad that mortal gift,
Thy Spirit from above,

* Natural.

To bless our eyes with sacred light,
And fire our hearts with love.

3 With speedy flight may He descend,
And solid comfort bring,
And o'er our languid souls extend
His all-reviving wing.

4 Blest earnest of eternal joy,
Declare our sins forgiven;
And bear with energy divine
Our raptur'd thoughts to heaven.

5 Diffuse, O God, these copious showers,
That earth its fruit may yield,
And change this barren wilderness
To Carmel's flowery field *.

CCLII. *The Word of Salvation sent to us.* Acts xiii. 26.

1 AND why do our admiring eyes
These gospel-glories see?
And whence, doth every heart reply,
Salvation sent to me?

2 In fatal shades of midnight gloom
Ten thousand wretches stray;
And Satan blinds ten thousand more
Amidst the blaze of day.

3 Millions of raging souls beneath,
In endless anguish hear
Harmonious sounds of grace transform'd
To echoes of despair.

4 And dost thou, Lord, subdue my heart,
And shew my sins forgiven,
And bear thy witness to my part
Amongst the heirs of heaven?

5 As the redeemed of the Lord,
We sing the Saviour's name;
And while the long salvation lasts,
Its sovereign grace proclaim.

CCLIII. *The unknown God.* Acts xvii. 23.

1 THOU, mighty Lord, art God alone,
A King of Majesty unknown;
And all thy dazzling glories rise
Beyond the reach of angels' eyes.

2 Yet through this earth thy works proclaim
Some notice of thy reverend name;

* Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2.

And, where thy gracious gospel shines,
We read it in the fairest lines.

3 But O! how few of Adam's race
Have learn'd thy nature and thy ways!
While thousands, e'en in lands of light,
Are buried in Egyptian night.

4 They tread thy courts, thy word they hear,
And to thy solemn rites draw near;
Yet, though salvation seems so nigh,
Because they know not God, they die.

5 Send thy victorious gospel forth
Wide from these regions of the north;
And through thy churches grace impart
To write thy name on every heart.

CCLIV. *God's Command to all Men to repent.* Acts xvii. 30.

1 REPENT, the voice celestial cries,
Nor longer dare delay:
The wretch that scorns the mandate * dies,
And meets a fiery day.

2 No more the sovereign eye of God
O'erlooks the crimes of men;
His heralds are dispatch'd abroad
To warn the world of sin.

3 The summons reach through all the earth;
Let earth attend and fear:
Listen, ye men of royal birth,
And let their vassals † hear.

4 Together in his presence bow,
And all your guilt confess;
Accept the offer'd Saviour now,
Nor trifle with the grace.

5 Bow, ere the awful trumpet sound,
And call you to his bar:
For mercy knows the appointed bound,
And turns to vengeance there.

6 Amazing love, that yet will call,
And yet prolong our days!
Our hearts subdu'd by goodness fall,
And weep, and love, and praise.

* Command. † Subjects and slaves.

CCLV. *Paul's Solicitude to finish his Course with Joy.* Acts xx. 24.

1 ASSIST us, Lord, thy name to praise
For this rich gospel of thy grace;
And, that our hearts may love it more,
Teach them to feel its vital power.

2 With joy may we our course pursue,
And keep the crown of life in view;
That crown, which in one hour repays
The labour of ten thousand days.

3 Should bonds or death obstruct our way,
Unmov'd their terrors we'll survey;
And the last hour improve for thee,
The last of life, or liberty.

4 Welcome those bonds, which may unite
Our souls to their supreme delight!
Welcome that death, whose painful strife
Bears us to Christ our better life!

CCLVI. *Paul preaching and Felix trembling.* Acts xxiv. 25.

1 GREAT Sovereign of the human heart,
Thy mighty energy impart,
Which darts at once through breasts of steel,
And makes the nether millstone * feel.

2 Let sinners tremble at thy word,
Struck by the terrors of the Lord;
And, while they tremble, let them flee,
And seek their help, their life from thee.

3 O! let them seize the present day,
Nor risk salvation by delay:
To-morrow, Lord, to thee belongs;
This night may vindicate thy wrongs.

4 This night may stop their fleeting breath,
And seal them to eternal death,
May veil redemption from their sight,
And give them flames instead of light.

5 Or should succeeding years remain,
Years, with their sabbaths, all in vain
Before their darken'd eyes may roll,
And more obdurate leave the soul.

6 Great Saviour, let thy pity rise,
And make the wretched triflers wise:
Lest pangs and trembling felt in vain
Hasten and feed immortal pain.

* The hardest hearts. Job xli. 24.

CCLVII. *Help obtained of God.* Acts xxvi. 22.

FOR NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

1 GREAT God, we sing that mighty hand,
By which supported still we stand:
The opening year thy mercy shews;
That mercy crowns it, till it close.

2 By day, by night, at home, abroad,
Still are we guarded by our God,
By his incessant bounty fed,
By his unerring counsel led.

3 With grateful hearts the past we own;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to thy guardian-care commit,
And peaceful leave before thy feet.

4 In scenes exalted or depress'd
Thou art our joy, and thou our rest:
Thy goodness all our hopes shall raise,
Ador'd through all our changing days.

5 When death shall interrupt these songs,
And seal in silence mortal tongues,
Our Helper-God, in whom we trust,
In better worlds our souls shall boast.

CCLVIII. *Treasuring up Wrath by despising Mercy.* Romans ii. 4, 5.

1 UNGRATEFUL sinners, whence this scorn
Of long-extended grace?
And whence this madness, that insults
The Almighty to his face?

2 Is it because his patience waits,
And pitying bowels move,
You multiply audacious crimes,
And spurn his richest love?

3 Is all the treasur'd wrath so small,
You labour still for more,
Though not eternal rolling years
Can e'er exhaust the store?

4 Swift doth the day of vengeance come,
That must your sentence seal;
And righteous judgment now unknown
In all its pomp reveal.

5 Alarm'd and melted at thy voice,
Our conquer'd hearts would bow;
And, to escape the thunderer then,
Embrace the Saviour now.

CCLIX. *The Love of God shed abroad in the Heart by the Spirit.* Romans v. 5.

1 DESCEND, immortal dove;
Spread thy kind wings abroad,
And, wrapt in flames of holy love,
Bear all my soul to God.

2 Jesus my Lord reveal
In charms of grace divine,
And be thyself the sacred seal,
That pearl of price is mine.

3 Behold my heart expands
To catch the heavenly fire;
It longs to feel the gentle bands,
And groans with strong desire.

4 Thy love, my God, appears,
And brings salvation down,
My cordial through this vale of tears,
In paradise my crown.

CCLX. *Christians quickened and raised by the Spirit.* Romans viii. 11.

1 WHY should our mourning thoughts delight
To grovel in the dust?
Or why should streams of tears unite
Around the expiring just?

2 Did not the Lord our Saviour die,
And triumph o'er the grave?
Did not our Lord ascend on high,
And prove his power to save?

3 Doth not the sacred Spirit come,
And dwell in all the saints?
And should the temples of his grace
Resound with long complaints?

4 Awake, my soul, and like the sun
Burst through each sable cloud;
And thou, my voice, though broke with sighs,
Tune forth thy songs aloud.

5 The spirit rais'd my Saviour up,
When he had bled for me;
And spite of death and hell shall raise
Thy pious friends and thee.

6 Awake, ye saints, that dwell in dust,
Your hymns of victory sing;
And let his dying servants trust
Their ever-living King.

CCLXI. *God's Readiness to give all Things, argued from the Gift of his Son.* Romans viii. 32.

1 NOW let my soul with transport rise,
And range through earth, and mount the skies,
And view each various form of good,
Where angels hold their high abode.

2 I give my thoughts unbounded scope;
On equal pinions soars my hope;
My faith at noblest objects aims,
And what she sees, she humbly claims.

3 Hath not the bounteous King of heaven,
From his embrace already given
That Son of his eternal love,
Who fill'd the brightest throne above?

4 Behold his hand on Jesus laid!
Behold that Lamb a victim made!
And what shall mercy hold too good
For sinners, ransom'd with his blood?

5 My soul, with heavenly faith embrace
The sacred covenant of his grace;
Then in delightful silence wait
The issues of a love so great.

CCLXII. *Believing with the Heart, and confessing with the Mouth, necessary to Salvation.* Romans x. 6—10.

1 AND is salvation brought so near,
Where sinful men expiring lie?
Triumph, my soul, the sound to hear,
And shout it joyous to the sky.

2 I ask not, who to heaven shall scale,
That Christ the Saviour thence may come;
Or who earth's inmost depths assail,
To bring him from the dreary tomb.

3 From heaven on wings of love he flew,
And conqueror from the tomb he sprung:
My heart believes the witness true,
And dictates to my faithful tongue.

4 I sing salvation brought so near,
No more on earth expiring lie;
I teach the world my joys to hear,
And shout them to the echoing sky.

CCLXIII. *The living Sacrifice.* Romans xii. 1.

1 AND will the eternal King
So mean a gift reward?
That offering, Lord, with joy we bring,
Which thy own hand prepar'd.

2 We own thy various claim,
And to thine altar move,
The willing victims of thy grace,
And bound with cords of love.

3 Descend, celestial fire,
The sacrifice inflame;
So shall a grateful odour rise
Through our Redeemer's name.

CCLXIV. *The near Approach of Salvation, an Engagement to Diligence and Love.* Romans xiii. 11.

1 AWAKE, ye saints, and raise your eyes,
And raise your voices high;
Awake, and praise that sovereign love,
That shews salvation nigh.

2 On all the wings of time it flies:
Each moment brings it near;
Then welcome each declining day!
Welcome each closing year!

3 Not many years their round shall run,
Nor many mornings rise,
Ere all its glories stand reveal'd
To our admiring eyes.

4 Ye wheels of nature, speed your course;
Ye mortal powers, decay;
Fast as ye bring the night of death,
Ye bring eternal day.

CCLXV. *The God of Peace bruising Satan.* Romans xvi. 20.

1 YE armies of the living God,
In his all-conquering name,
Lift up your banners, and aloud
Your leader's grace proclaim.

2 What though the prince of hell invade
With showers of fiery darts,
And join, to the fierce lion's roar,
The serpent's wily arts?

3 Jesus, who leads his hosts to war,
Shall tread the monster down,

And every faithful soldier share
The triumph and the crown.

4 So Israel on the haughty necks
Of Canaan's tyrants trod,
And sung their Joshua's conquering sword,
And sung their faithful God*.

CCLXVI. *Christ our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.* 1 Corinthians i. 30, 31.

1 MY God, assist me, while I raise
An anthem of harmonious praise;
My heart thy wonders shall proclaim,
And spread its banners in thy name.

2 In Christ I view a store divine:
My Father, all that store is thine;
By thee prepar'd, by thee bestow'd;
Hail to the Saviour, and the God!

3 When gloomy shades my soul o'erspread,
"Let there be light," the Almighty said;
And Christ, my sun, his beams displays,
And scatters round celestial rays.

4 Condemn'd thy criminal I stood,
And awful justice ask'd my blood;
That welcome Saviour from thy throne
Brought righteousness and pardon down.

5 My soul was all o'erspread with sin,
And lo, his grace hath made me clean:
He rescues from the infernal foe,
And full redemption will bestow.

6 Ye saints, assist my grateful tongue:
Ye angels, warble back my song:
For love like this demands the praise
Of heavenly harps, and endless days.

CCLXVII. *Being joined to Christ, and one Spirit with him.* 1 Corinthians vi. 17.

1 MY Saviour, I am thine,
By everlasting bands;
My name, my heart, I would resign,
My soul is in thy hands.

2 To thee I still would cleave
With ever-growing zeal;
Let millions tempt me Christ to leave,
They never shall prevail.

* Joshua x. 24.

3 His Spirit shall unite
My soul to him, my head;
Shall form me to his image bright,
And teach his path to tread.

4 Death may my soul divide
From this abode of clay;
But love shall keep me near his side
Through all the gloomy way.

5 Since Christ and we are one,
What should remain to fear?
If he in heaven hath fix'd his throne,
He'll fix his members there.

CCLXVIII. *The transitory Nature of the World, an Argument for Christian Moderation.* 1 Corinthians vii. 29—31.

1 SPRING up, my soul, with ardent flight,
Nor let this earth delude thy sight
With glittering trifles gay and vain:
Wisdom divine directs thy view
To objects ever grand and new,
And faith displays the shining train.

2 Be dead, my hopes, to all below;
Nor let unbounded torrents flow,
When mourning o'er my withered joys:
So this deceitful world is known;
Possess'd I call it not my own;
Nor glory in its painted toys.

3 The empty pageant rolls along;
The giddy unexperienc'd throng
Pursue it with enchanted eyes;
It passeth in swift march away,
Still more and more its charms decay,
Till the last gaudy colour dies *.

4 My God, to thee my soul shall turn;
For thee my noblest passions burn,
And drink in bliss from thee alone:
I fix on that unchanging home,
Where never-fading pleasures bloom,
Fresh springing round thy radiant throne.

* Pageants, images, or emblematical figures in a cavalcade or procession, continually moving, and quickly gone out of sight. See Family Expositor in Loc.

CCLXIX. *God's Fidelity in moderating Temptations.* 1 Corinthians x. 13.

1 NOW let the feeble all be strong,
And make Jehovah's arm their song:
His shield is spread o'er every saint,
And thus supported, who shall faint?

2 What though the hosts of hell engage
With mingled cruelty and rage!
A faithful God restrains their hands,
And chains them down in iron bands.

3 Bound by his word he will display,
A strength proportion'd to our day;
And, when united trials meet,
Will shew a path of safe retreat.

4 Thus far we prove that promise good,
Which Jesus ratified with blood:
Still is he gracious, wise, and just,
And still in him let Israel trust.

CCLXX. *Bearing the Image of the Earthy and the Heavenly Adam.* 1 Corinthians xv. 49.

1 WITH flowing eyes and bleeding hearts
A blasted world survey!
See the wide ruin sin hath wrought
In one unhappy day!

2 Adam, in God's own image form'd
From God and bliss estrang'd,
And all the joys of paradise
For guilt and horror chang'd!

3 Ages of labour and of grief
He mourn'd his glory lost;
At length the goodliest work of heaven
Sunk down to common dust.

4 O fatal heritage bequeath'd
To all his helpless race!
Through the thick maze of sin and woe
Thus to the grave we pass.

5 But, O my soul! with rapture hear
The second Adam's name;
And the celestial gifts he brings
To all his seed, proclaim.

6 In holiness and joy complete
He reigns to endless years,
And each adopted chosen child
His splendid image wears.

7 What though in mortal life they mourn!
What though by death they fall!
Jesus in one triumphant day
Transforms and crowns them all.

8 Praise to his rich mysterious grace!
E'en by our fall we rise;
And gain, for earthly Eden lost,
A heavenly paradise.

CCLXXI. *Ministers comforted, that they may comfort others.*
2 Corinthians i. 4.

1 FOUNTAIN of comfort and of love,
Thy streams, how free they flow!
First water all the world above,
Then visit us below!

2 From Christ, the head, what grace descends
To cherish every part!
He shares his joys with all his friends,
For all have shar'd his heart.

3 What though the sorrows here they feel
Are manifold and great!
He brings new consolations still,
As various and as sweet.

4 He shews our numerous sins forgiven,
And shews our Covenant-God;
He witnesseth our right to heaven,
The purchase of his blood.

5 Though earth and hell against us join,
In him we are secure;
Our diadems shall brighter shine,
For all we now endure.

6 On every faithful shepherd's breast,
Lord, send these comforts down;
That they may lead thy flock to rest,
Which their own souls have known.

CCLXXII. *God's delivering Goodness acknowledged, and trusted.*
2 Corinthians i. 10.

A SONG FOR THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.

1 PRAISE to the Lord, whose mighty hand
So oft reveal'd hath sav'd our land;
And, when united nations rose,
Hath sham'd and scourg'd our haughtiest foes.

2 When mighty navies from afar
To Britain wafted floating war,

His breath dispers'd them all with ease,
And sunk their terrors in the seas*.

3 While for our princes they prepare
In caverns deep a burning snare;
He shot from heaven a piercing ray,
And the dark treachery brought to day †.

4 Princes and priests again combine
New chains to forge, new snares to twine;
Again our gracious God appears,
And breaks their chains, and cuts their snares.

5 Obedient winds at his command
Convey his hero to our land;
The sons of Rome with terror view,
And speed their flight, when none pursue‡.

6 Such great deliverance God hath wrought,
And down to us salvation brought;
And still the care of guardian-heaven
Secures the bliss itself hath given.

7 In thee we trust, Almighty Lord,
Continued rescue to afford:
Still be thy powerful arm made bare,
For all thy servants hopes are there.

CCLXXIII. *Ministers a sweet Savour, whether of Life or Death.*
2 Corinthians ii. 15, 16.

1 PRAISE to the Lord on high,
Who spreads his triumphs wide!
While Jesus' fragrant name
Is breath'd on every side:
Balmy and rich
The odours rise,
And fill the earth
And reach the skies.

2 Ten thousand dying souls
Its influence feel and live;
Sweeter than vital air
The incense they receive:
They breathe anew,
And rise and sing
Jesus the Lord,
Their conquering king.

* Referring to the defeat of the Spanish armada, 1588.
† Gunpowder plot.
‡ Revolution by king William, 1688.

3 But sinners scorn the grace,
That brings salvation nigh;
They turn their face away,
And faint, and fall, and die.
So sad a doom,
Ye saints, deplore,
For O! they fall
To rise no more.

4 Yet, wise and mighty God,
Shall all thy servants be,
In those, who live or die,
A savour sweet to thee:
Supremely bright
Thy grace shall shine,
Guarded with flames
Of wrath divine.

CCLXXIV. *God shining into the Heart.* 2 Corinthians iv. 6.

1 PRAISE to the Lord of boundless might,
With uncreated glories bright!
His presence gilds the worlds above;
The unchanging source of light and love.

2 Our rising earth his eye beheld,
When in substantial darkness veil'd;
The shapeless chaos, nature's womb,
Lay buried in eternal gloom*,

3 *Let there be light*, Jehovah said,
And light o'er all its face was spread;
Nature array'd in charms unknown,
Gay with its new-born lustre shone.

4 He sees the mind, when lost it lies
In shades of ignorance and vice;
And darts from heaven a vivid* ray,
And changes midnight into day.

5 Shine, mighty God, with vigour shine
On this benighted heart of mine;
And let thy glories stand reveal'd,
As in the Saviour's face beheld.

6 My soul, reviv'd by heaven-born day,
Thy radiant image shall display,
While all my faculties unite
To praise the Lord, who gives me light.

* Genesis i. 2, 3. † Lively, sprightly.

CCLXXV. *The Gospel Treasure in earthen Vessels.* 2 Corinthians iv. 7.

1 HOW rich thy bounty, King of kings!
Thy favours how divine!
The blessings, which thy gospel brings,
How splendidly they shine!

2 Gold is but dross, and gems but toys,
Should gold and gems compare;
How mean, when set against those joys,
Thy poorest servant's share!

3 Yet all these treasures of thy grace
Are lodg'd in urns * of clay;
And the weak sons of mortal race
The immortal gifts convey.

4 Feebly they lisp thy glories forth;
Yet grace the victory gives:
Quickly they moulder back to earth;
Yet still thy gospel lives.

5 Such wonders power divine effects;
Such trophies † God can raise;
His hand from crumbling dust erects
Long monuments of praise.

CCLXXVI. *Living to him, who Died for us.* 2 Corinthians v. 14, 15.

1 MY Lord, didst thou endure such smart
My life, when forfeited, to save?
And didst thou bear upon thy heart
My name, when rising from the grave?

2 Am I in thy remembrance still,
'Midst all the glories of thy throne?
To form thy servant to thy will,
And fix my dwelling near thy own?

3 What can a feeble worm repay
For love so infinite as thine?
The torrent bears my soul away,
The impetuous stream of grace divine ‡.

4 To thee, my Lord, it bears me on;
Self shall be deify'd § no more;
By self betray'd, by self undone,
I live by thy recovering power.

5 Accept a soul so dearly bought,
Bought by thy life upon the tree;
A soul, which, by thy Spirit taught,
Knows no delight, but serving thee.

* Vessels or jars. † Monuments or tokens of victory.
‡ Referring to the emphasis of the original word, viz. bears us away like a strong torrent. § Made a God of.

CCLXXVII. *God the Author of Consolation.* 2 Corinthians vii. 6.

1 THE Lord, how rich his comforts are!
How wide they spread! How high they rise!
He pours in balm to bleeding hearts,
And wipes the tears from flowing eyes.

2 "I have no hope," my spirit cry'd,
Just trembling on the brink of hell;
"I am thy hope," the Lord reply'd,
"My love secures its favourites well."

3 My grateful soul shall speak its praise,
Who turns its tremblings into songs;
And those that mourn shall learn from me,
Salvation to our God belongs.

CCLXXVIII. *Satan's Strong-Holds cast down by the Gospel.* 2 Corinthians x. 4, 5.

1 SHOUT, for the battlements are fall'n,
Which heaven itself defy'd!
The aspiring towers, dismantled * all,
Now spread their ruins wide!

2 Thy wondrous trumpets, prince of peace,
Sent forth their mighty sound;
The strength of Jericho was struck,
And totter'd to the ground †.

3 No more proud reasonings shall dispute
What truth divine declares;
No more self-righteousness to plead
Its own perfections dares.

4 No strength our ruin'd powers can boast
Thy precepts to fulfil;
No liberty we ask or wish
For our rebellious will.

5 The gates we open to admit
The Saviour's gentle sway:
Blest Jesus, 'tis thy right to reign,
Our pleasure to obey.

6 Each thought in sweet subjection held,
Thy sovereign power shall own;
And every traitor shall be slain,
That dares dispute the throne.

* Demolished, broke down.

† Joshua vi. 20.

CCLXXIX. *The Christian Farewel.* 2 Corinthians xiii. 11.

1 THY presence, everlasting God,
Wide o'er all nature spreads abroad;
Thy watchful eyes, which cannot sleep,
In every place thy children keep.

2 While near each other we remain,
Thou dost our lives and souls sustain;
When absent, happy if we share
Thy smiles, thy counsels, and thy care.

3 To thee we all our ways commit,
And seek our comforts near thy feet;
Still on our souls vouchsafe to shine,
And guard and guide us still as thine.

4 Give us in thy beloved house
Again to pay our grateful vows;
Or, if that joy no more be known,
Give us to meet around thy throne.

CCLXXX. *Living while in the Flesh by Faith in Christ, who loved us, &c.* Galatians ii. 20.

1 MY Jesus, while in mortal flesh
I hold my frail abode,
Still would my spirit rest on thee,
Its Saviour, and its God.

2 By hourly faith in thee I live
'Midst all my griefs and snares;
And death, encounter'd in thy sight,
No form of horror wears.

3 Yes, thou hast lov'd this sinful worm,
Hast given thyself for me;
Hast bought me from eternal death,
Nail'd to the bloody tree.

4 On thy dear cross I fix mine eyes,
Then raise them to thy seat;
Till love dissolves my inmost soul,
At its Redeemer's feet.

5 Be dead, my heart, to worldly charms;
Be dead to every sin;
And tell the boldest foes without,
That Jesus reigns within.

6 My life with his connected stands,
Nor asks a surer ground;
He keeps me in his gracious arms,
Where heaven itself is found.

CCLXXXI. *A filial Temper, the Work of the Spirit, and a Proof of Adoption.* Galatians iv. 6.

1 SOVEREIGN of all the worlds on high,
Allow my humble claim;
Nor, while a worm would raise its head,
Disdain a Father's name.

2 My Father-God! How sweet the sound!
How tender, and how dear!
Not all the melody of heaven
Could so delight the ear.

3 Come sacred Spirit, seal the name
On mine expanding heart;
And shew, that in Jehovah's grace
I share a filial part.

4 Cheer'd by a signal so divine,
Unwavering I believe;
Thou knowest I, Abba, Father, cry,
Nor can the sign deceive.

5 On wings of everlasting love
The comforter is come;
All terrors at his voice disperse,
And endless pleasures bloom.

CCLXXXII. *Christian Sympathy.* Galatians vi. 2.

1 HAIL, everlasting Prince of peace!
Hail, Governor divine!
How gracious is thy sceptre's sway!
What gentle laws are thine!

2 His tender heart with love o'erflow'd,
Love spoke in every breath;
Vigorous it reign'd through all his life,
And triumph'd in his death.

3 All these united charms he shews
Our frozen souls to move;
This proof of love to him demands,
That we each other love.

4 O be the sacred law fulfill'd
In every act and thought;
Each angry passion far remov'd,
Each selfish view forgot.

5 Be thou, my heart, dilated wide
By thy Redeemer's grace;
And, in one grasp of fervent love,
All earth and heaven embrace.

CCLXXXIII. *Blessing God for spiritual Blessings in Christ.* Ephesians i. 3.

1 LOUD be thy name ador'd,
Thy titles spread abroad,
Of Christ, our glorious Lord,
The Father and the God!
Through such a Son,
Thy church's head,
Thine honours spread
O'er worlds unknown.

2 Ten thousand gifts of love
From thee through him descend;
And bear our souls above
To joys that never end:
To heaven they soar,
Sustain'd by God,
And through the road
His arm adore.

3 Ten thousand songs of praise
Shall by the Saviour rise,
And through eternal days
Shall echo round the skies.
New shouts we'll give,
And loud proclaim
The honour'd name,
By which we live.

CCLXXXIV. *The grand Scheme of the Gospel.* Ephesians i. 9, 10, 11.

1 WE sing the deep mysterious plan,
Which God devis'd, ere time began;
At length disclos'd in all its light.
We bless the wondrous birth of love,
Which beams around us from above,
With grace so free, and hope so bright.

2 Here has the wise eternal mind
In Christ, their common head, conjoin'd
Gentiles and Jews, and earth and heaven:
Through him, from the great Father's throne,
Rivers of bliss come rolling down,
And endless peace and life are given.

3 No more the awful cherubs guard
The tree of life with flaming sword,
To drive afar man's trembling race;
At Salem's pearly gates they stand,
And smiling wait, a friendly band!
To welcome strangers to the place.

4 While we expect the glorious sight,
Love shall our hearts with theirs unite,
And ardent hope our bosoms raise:
From earth's dark vale, and tongues of clay,
To these resplendent realms of day,
We'll try to send the sounding praise.

CCLXXXV. *The heavenly Inheritance made known by the Spirit.* Ephesians i. 18.

1 COME, thou celestial Spirit, come,
And call my roving passions home;
To mine enlightened eyes display
The heritage of heavenly day.

2 My God, that heritage is thine:
How rich, how glorious, how divine!
How far above all mortal things,
The little pride of courts and kings!

3 Of endless joy the unbounded store,
Why is its lustre known no more?
Away, ye mists of envious night,
That veil salvation from my sight!

4 Shine forth, Almighty Saviour, shine;
Shew the bright world, and shew it mine;
Then paradise on earth shall spring,
And mortal worms like angels sing.

CCLXXXVI. *Salvation by Grace.* Ephesians ii. 5.

1 GRACE! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to my ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

2 Grace first contriv'd a way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display;
Which drew the wondrous plan.

3 Grace taught my wandering feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each hour I meet,
While pressing on to God.

4 Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.

CCLXXXVII. *Christians risen and exalted with Christ to heavenly Places.* Ephesians ii. 5, 6.

1 STUPENDOUS grace! and can it be
Design'd for rebels such as we?
O let our ardent praises rise,
High as our hopes beyond the skies!

2 This flesh, by righteous vengeance slain,
Might ever in the dust remain;
These guilty spirits sent to dwell
'Midst all the flames and fiends * of hell.

3 But lo, incarnate love descends;
Down to the sepulchre it bends;
Rising, it tears the bars away,
And springs to its own native day.

4 Then was our sepulchre unbarr'd;
Then was our path to glory clear'd;
Then, if that Saviour be our own,
Did we ascend a heavenly throne.

5 A moment shall our joy complete,
And fix us in that shining seat,
Bought by the pangs our Lord endur'd,
And by unchanging truth secur'd.

6 O may that love, in strains sublime,
Be sung to the last hour of time!
And let eternity confess,
Through all its rounds, the matchless grace.

CCLXXXVIII. *Nearness to God through Christ.* Ephesians ii. 13.

1 AND are we now brought near to God,
Who once at distance stood?
And, to effect this glorious change,
Did Jesus shed his blood?

2 O for a song of ardent praise
To bear our souls above!
What should allay our lively hope,
Or damp our flaming love?

3 Draw us, O Lord, with quickening grace,
And bring us yet more near;
Here may we see thy glories shine,
And taste thy mercies here.

4 O may that love, which spread thy board,
Dispose us for the feast;
May faith behold a smiling God
Through Jesus' bleeding breast.

* Evil spirits.

5 Fir'd with the view, our souls shall rise
In such a scene as this,
And view the happy moment near,
That shall complete our bliss.

CCLXXXIX. *The Institution of a Gospel-Ministry from Christ.* Ephesians iv. 11, 12.

FOR THE ORDINATION OR SETTLEMENT OF A MINISTER.

1 FATHER of mercies, in thy house
Smile on our homage, and our vows;
While with a grateful heart we share
These pledges of our Saviour's care.

2 The Saviour, when to heaven he rose
In splendid triumph o'er his foes,
Scatter'd his gifts on men below,
And wide his royal bounties flow.

3 Hence sprung the apostles honoured name,
Sacred beyond heroic fame;
Hence dictates the prophetic sage;
And hence the evangelic page.

4 In lowlier forms, to bless our eyes,
Pastors from hence, and teachers rise;
Who, though with feebler rays they shine,
Still gild a long-extended line.

5 From Christ their varied gifts derive,
And fed by Christ their graces live:
While, guarded by his potent hand,
'Midst all the rage of hell they stand.

6 So shall the bright succession run
Through the last courses of the sun;
While unborn churches by their care
Shall rise and flourish large and fair.

7 Jesus our Lord their hearts shall know,
The spring, whence all these blessings flow:
Pastors and people shout his praise
Through the long round of endless days.

CCXC. *Christ the Head of the Church.* Ephesians iv. 15, 16.

1 JESUS, I sing thy matchless grace,
That calls a worm thy own;
Gives me among thy saints a place
To make thy glories known.

2 Allied to thee our vital head,
We act, and grow, and thrive:
From thee divided, each is dead,
When most he seems alive.

3 Thy saints on earth, and those above
Here join in sweet accord;
One body all in mutual love,
And thou, our common Lord.

4 O may my faith each hour derive
Thy spirit with delight;
While death and hell in vain shall strive
This bond to disunite.

5 Thou the whole body wilt present
Before thy Father's face;
Nor shall a wrinkle or a spot
Its beauteous form disgrace.

CCXCI. *Love to others urged from Christ's Love, in giving himself a Sacrifice.* Ephesians v. 2.

1 NOW be that sacrifice survey'd,
That ransom which the Saviour paid;
That sight familiar to my view,
Yet always wondrous, always new.

2 The Lamb of God, that groan'd and bled,
And gently bow'd his dying head;
While love to sinners fir'd his heart,
And conquered all the killing smart.

3 Blest Jesus, while thy grace I sing,
What grateful tribute shall I bring,
That earth and heaven and thou may'st see
My love to him, who died for me?

4 That offering, Lord, thy word hath taught,
Nor be thy new command forgot,
That, if their Master's death can move,
Thy servants should each other love.

5 When to thy sacred cross we fly,
There let each savage passion die;
While the warm streams of blood divine
Melt our cold hearts to love like thine.

CCXCII. *The Wisdom of redeeming Time.* Ephesians v. 15, 16.

1 GOD of eternity, from thee
Did infant-time his being draw;
Moments and days, and months and years,
Revolve by thine unvaried law.

2 Silent and slow they glide away;
Steady and strong the current flows,
Lost in eternity's wild sea,
The boundless gulf, from whence it rose.

3 With it the thoughtless sons of men
Before the rapid streams are borne
On to that everlasting home,
Where not one soul can e'er return.

4 Yet while the shore on either side
Presents a gaudy flattering shew,
We gaze, in fond amusement lost,
Nor think to what a world we go.

5 Great source of wisdom, teach my heart
To know the price of every hour;
That time may bear me on to joys
Beyond its measure, and its power.

CCXCIII. *Christ's Love to the Church in giving himself for it, &c.*
Ephesians v. 25—27.

1 BRIDEGROOM of souls, how rich thy love!
How generous, how divine!
Our inmost hearts it well may move,
While thus our voices join.

2 Deform'd and wretched once we lay,
Worthy thy hate and scorn;
Yet love like thine could find a way
To rescue and adorn.

3 Thou art our ransom; from thy veins
A wondrous fountain flows,
To wash thy bride from all her stains,
And heal our deepest woes.

4 Transform'd by thee, e'en here below
Thy church is bright and fair:
But O! how glorious shall she shew,
When Jesus shall appear!

5 Thine eye shall all her form survey
With infinite delight,
Confess'd, in that illustrious day,
Unblemish'd in thy sight.

CCXCIV. *Christ's Service, the Fruit of our Labours on Earth.*
Philippians i. 22.

1 MY gracious Lord, I own thy right
To every service I can pay;
And call it my supreme delight
To hear thy dictates and obey.

2 What is my being, but for thee,
Its sure support, its noblest end?
Thy ever-smiling face to see,
And serve the cause of such a friend?

3 I would not breathe for worldly joy,
Or to increase my worldly good;
Nor future days, or powers employ
To spread a sounding name abroad.

4 'Tis to my Saviour I would live;
To him, who for my ransom died,
Nor could untainted Eden give
Such bliss, as blossoms at his side.

5 His work my hoary age shall bless,
When youthful vigour is no more:
And my last hour of life confess
His love hath animating power.

CCXCV. *The Happiness of departing, and being with Christ.*
Philippians i. 23.

1 WHILE on the verge of life I stand,
And view the scene on either hand,
My spirit struggles with its clay,
And longs to wing its flight away.

2 Where Jesus dwells my soul would be;
It faints my much-lov'd Lord to see:
Earth, twine no more about my heart,
For 'tis far better to depart.

3 Come, ye angelic envoys*, come,
And lead the willing pilgrim home:
Ye know the way to Jesus' throne,
Source of my joys, and of your own.

4 That blessed interview, how sweet!
To fall transported at his feet!
Rais'd in his arms to view his face,
Through the full beamings of his grace!

5 To see heaven's shining courtiers round,
Each with immortal glories crown'd!
And, while his form in each I trace,
Belov'd, and loving, all to embrace!

6 As with a Seraph's voice to sing!
To fly as on a cherub's wing!
Performing with unwearied hands
A present Saviour's high commands!

7 Yet, with these prospects full in sight,
I'll wait thy signal for my flight;
For, while thy service I pursue,
I find my heaven begun below.

* Messengers, ambassadors.

CCXCVI. *Pressing on in the Christian Race.* Philippians iii. 12—14.

1 AWAKE, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigour on:
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

2 A cloud of witnesses around,
Hold thee in full survey:
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way.

3 'Tis God's all-animating voice,
That calls thee from on high;
'Tis his own hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye.

4 That prize with peerless glories bright,
Which shall new lustre boast,
When victors' wreaths*, and monarchs' gems
Shall blend in common dust.

5 Blest Saviour, introduc'd by thee,
Have I my race begun;
And crown'd with victory at thy feet
I'll lay my honours down.

CCXCVII. *God supplying the Necessities of his People.* Philippians iv. 19, 20.

1 MY God, how cheerful is the sound!
How pleasant to repeat!
Well may that heart with pleasure bound,
Where God hath fix'd his seat.

2 What want shall not our God supply
From his redundant stores?
What streams of mercy from on high
An arm Almighty pours!

3 From Christ, the ever-living spring,
These ample blessings flow:
Prepare, my lips, his name to sing,
Whose heart hath lov'd us so.

4 Now to our Father and our God
Be endless glory given,
Through all the realms of man's abode,
And through the highest heaven.

* Crowns or garlands given to conquerors.

CCXCVIII. *Thankfulness for being made meet for the heavenly Inheritance.* Colossians i. 12.

1 ALL-Glorious God, what hymns of praise
Shall our transported voices raise?
What flaming love and zeal is due,
While heaven stands open to our view!

2 Once we were fall'n, and O! how low!
Just on the brink of endless woe;
Doom'd to a heritage in hell,
Where sinners all in darkness dwell.

3 But lo, a ray of cheerful light
Scatters the horrid shades of night!
Lo, what triumphant grace is shewn
To souls impoverish'd and undone!

4 Far, far beyond these mortal shores
A bright inheritance is ours;
Where saints in light our coming wait,
To share their holy blissful state.

5 If ready drest for heaven we shine,
Thine are the robes, the crown is thine:
May endless years their course prolong,
While "Thine the praise," is all our song.

CCXCIX. *Angels and Christians united in Christ, as their common Head.* Colossians ii. 10.

1 HAIL to Emanuel's ever-honour'd name!
Spread it, ye angels, through heaven's sacred flame.
Ye scepter'd cherubim, before his throne,
And flaming Seraphim, bow humbly down.
He is your head; with prostrate awe adore him,
And lay with joy your radiant crowns before him.

2 Array'd in his refulgent beams ye shine,
And draw existence from his source divine;
Grateful ye wait the signal of his hand,
Honour'd too highly by his least command:
In him the indwelling Deity admiring,
And to his brighter image still aspiring.

3 Mortals with you in cheerful homage join,
And bring their anthems to Emanuel's shrine;
Mean as we are, with sins and griefs beset,
We glory, that in him we are complete.
He is our head, and we with you adore him,
And pour our wants, our joys, our hearts before him.

4 We sing the blood, that ransom'd us from hell;
We sing the graces, that in Jesus dwell;
Led by his Spirit, guarded by his hand,
Our hopes anticipate your goodly land;
Still his incarnate Deity admiring,
And with heaven's hierarchy * in praise conspiring.

CCC. *Christians, as risen with Christ, exhorted to seek Things above.*
Colossians iii. 1.

1 HEARKEN, ye children of your God;
Ye heirs of glory, hear;
For accents so divine as these
Might charm the dullest ear.

2 Baptiz'd into your Saviour's death,
Your souls to sin must die;
With Christ our Lord ye live anew,
With Christ ascend on high.

3 There at his Father's hand he sits
Enthron'd divinely fair;
Yet owns himself your brother still,
And your forerunner there.

4 Rise from these earthly trifles, rise,
On wings of faith and love;
Jesus your choicest treasure lies,
And be your hearts, above.

5 But earth and sin will drag us down,
When we attempt to fly;
Lord, send thy strong attractive force
To raise and fix us high.

CCCI. *The Prosperity of the Church, the Life of a faithful Minister,*
1 Thessalonians iii. 8.

1 BLEST Jesus, bow thine ear,
While we intreat thy love;
O come, and all our hearts possess,
And our best passions move.

2 May we stand fast in thee,
Though storms and tempests beat;
And in thy guardian-arms obtain
A calm and safe retreat.

3 Still be thy truth maintain'd,
And still thy word obey'd,
And to the merits of thy blood
A constant homage paid.

* The several orders of angels.

4 So shall thy shepherds live,
And raise their cheerful head,
And, in such blessings on their flock,
Confess their toils repaid.

CCCII. *Comfort on the Death of pious Friends.* 1 Thessalonians iv. 17, 18.

1 TRANSPORTING tidings which we hear!
What music to the pious ear!
Christ loves each humble saint so well,
He with his Lord shall ever dwell.

2 Blest Jesus, source of every grace,
From far to view thy smiling face,
While absent thus by faith we live,
Exceeds all joys, that earth can give.

3 But O! what ecstasy unknown
Fills the wide circle round thy throne,
Where every rapturous hour appears
Nobler than millions of our years!

4 Millions by millions multiplied
Shall ne'er thy saints from thee divide;
But the bright legions live and praise
Through all thy own immortal days.

5 O happy dead, in thee that sleep,
While o'er their mouldering dust we weep!
O faithful Saviour, who shalt come
That dust to ransom from the tomb!

6 While thine unerring word imparts
So rich a cordial to our hearts,
Through tears our triumphs shall be shown,
Though round their graves, and near our own.

CCCIII. *Christ glorified and admired in his Saints at the great Day.* 2 Thessalonians i. 10.

1 YE heavens, with sounds of triumph ring;
Ye angels, burst into a song;
Jesus descends, victorious King,
And leads his shining train along.

2 Ye saints that sleep in dust, arise;
Let joy reanimate your clay;
Spring to your Saviour through the skies,
And round his throne your homage pay.

3 Then let the sons of heaven draw nigh,
While to the astonish'd hosts you tell,
How feeble mortals rose so high
From graves and worms, from sin and hell.

4 Tell them, in accents like their own,
What an incarnate God could do;
Then point to Jesus on the throne,
And boast, that Jesus died for you.

5 Transported, they no more can hear;
Their voices catch the sacred name;
Harmonious to his Father's ear,
Jesus the God, their harps proclaim!

6 Sin hath its dire * incursions made,
That thou might'st prove thy power to save;
And death its ensigns wide display'd,
That thou might'st triumph o'er the grave.

CCCIV. *Christ seen of Angels.* 1 Timothy iii. 16.

1 O Ye immortal throng
Of angels round the throne,
Join with our feeble song
To make the Saviour known:
On earth ye knew
His wondrous grace,
His beauteous face
In heaven ye view.

2 Ye saw the heaven-born child
In human flesh array'd,
Benevolent and mild,
While in the manger laid:
And praise to God,
And peace on earth,
For such a birth,
Proclaim'd aloud.

3 Ye in the wilderness
Beheld the tempter spoil'd,
Well known in every dress,
In every combat foil'd;
And joy'd to crown
The victor's head,
When Satan fled
Before his frown.

4 Around the bloody tree
Ye press'd with strong desire,
That wondrous sight to see,
The Lord of life expire;
And, could your eyes
Have known a tear,

* Dreadful.

Had drop'd it there
In sad surprise.

5 Around his sacred tomb
A willing watch ye keep;
Till the blest moment come
To rouze him from his sleep
Then roll'd the stone,
And all ador'd
Your rising Lord
With joy unknown.

6 When all arrayed in light
The shining conqueror rode,
Ye hail'd his rapturous flight
Up to the throne of God;
And wav'd around
Your golden wings,
And struck your strings
Of sweetest sound.

7 The warbling notes pursue,
And louder anthems raise;
While mortals sing with you
Their own Redeemer's praise:
And thou, my heart,
With equal flame,
And joy the same,
Perform thy part.

CCCV. *The Stability of the divine Foundation, and its double Inscription.* 2 Timothy ii. 19.

1 TO thee, Great Architect on high,
Immortal thanks be paid,
Who, to support thy sinking saints,
This firm foundation laid!

2 Fix'd on a rock thy gospel stands,
And braves the rage of hell;
And, while the Saviour's hand protects,
His blood cements it well.

3 Here will I build my final hope;
Here rest my weary soul;
Majestic shall the fabric rise,
Till glory crown the whole.

4 Deep on my heart, all-gracious Lord,
Engrave its double seal;
Which, while it speaks thy honour'd name,
Its sacred use may tell.

5 Dear by a thousand tender bonds,
Thy saints to thee are known ;
And, conscious what a name they bear,
Iniquity they shun.

CCCVI. *Persecution to be expected by every true Christian.*
2 Timothy iii. 12.

1 GREAT Leader of thine Israel's host,
We shout thy conquering name ;
Legions of foes beset thee round,
And legions fled with shame.

2 A victory glorious and complete
Thou by thy death didst gain ;
So in thy cause may we contend,
And death itself sustain !

3 By our illustrious general fir'd,
We no extremes would fear ;
Prepar'd to struggle and to bleed,
If thou, our Lord, be near.

4 We'll trace the footsteps thou hast drawn
To triumph and renown ;
Nor shun thy combat and thy cross,
May we but share thy crown.

CCCVII. *The Christian Scheme of Salvation worthy of God.*
Hebrews ii. 10.

1 IMMORTAL God, on thee we call,
The great original of all ;
Through thee we are, to thee we tend,
Our sure support, our glorious end.

2 We praise that wise mysterious grace,
That pitied our revolted race,
And Jesus, our victorious head,
The captain of salvation made.

3 He, thine eternal love decreed,
Should many sons to glory lead ;
And sinful worms to him are given,
A colony to people heaven.

4 Jesus for us, O gracious name !
Encounter'd agony and shame :
Jesus, the glorious and the great,
Was by dire sufferings made complete.

5 A scene of wonders here we see,
Worthy thy Son, and worthy Thee:
And, while this theme employs our tongues,
All heaven unites its sweetest songs.

CCCVIII. *Satan and Death conquered by the Death of Christ.* Hebrews ii. 14, 15.

1 SATAN, the dire invader came
Our new-made world to annoy:
And death march'd dreadful in his rear,
His captives to destroy.

2 Caught with his snares our father sunk;
With him his children fell;
And death his fatal shaft * prepar'd
To smite them down to hell.

3 Jesus with pitying eye beheld,
And left his starry crown;
Turn'd his own weapons on the foe,
And mow'd his legions down.

4 By death the Saviour death disarm'd,
That we in light may shine;
And fix'd this great mysterious law,
That dust should dust refine.

5 No more the pointed shaft we fear,
Nor dread the monster's boast;
No more the pious dead we mourn,
As friends for ever lost.

6 Their tongues, great Prince of life, shall join
With our recover'd breath,
And all the immortal hosts, to ascribe
Our victory to thy death.

CCCIX. *An immediate Attention to God's Voice required.* Hebrews iii. 15.

1 THE Lord Jehovah calls,
Be every ear inclin'd;
May such a voice awake each heart,
And captivate the mind.

2 If He in thunder speaks,
Earth trembles at his nod;
But gentle accents here proclaim
The condescending God.

3 O harden not your hearts,
But hear his voice to-day;

* Arrow.

Lest, ere to-morrow's earliest dawn,
He call your souls away.

4 Almighty God, pronounce
The word of conquering grace;
So shall the flint dissolve to tears,
And scorners seek thy face.

CCCX. *The eternal Sabbath.* Hebrews iv. 9.

1 LORD of the sabbath, hear our vows,
On this thy day, in this thy house:
And own, as grateful sacrifice,
The songs, which from the desart rise.

2 Thine earthly sabbaths, Lord, we love;
But there's a nobler rest above;
To that our labouring souls aspire
With ardent pangs of strong desire.

3 No more fatigue, no more distress;
Nor sin nor hell shall reach the place;
No groans to mingle with the songs,
Which warble from immortal tongues.

4 No rude alarms of raging foes;
No cares to break the long repose;
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon.

5 O long-expected day begin!
Dawn on these realms of woe and sin;
Fain would we leave this weary road,
And sleep in death to rest with God.

CCCXI. *Christ our Forerunner, and the Foundation of our Hope.* Hebrews vi. 19, 20.

1 JESUS, the Lord our souls adore,
A painful sufferer now no more;
High on his Father's throne he reigns
O'er earth, and heaven's extensive plains.

2 His race for ever is complete;
For ever undisturb'd his seat;
Myriads of angels round him fly,
And sing his well-gain'd victory.

3 Yet, 'midst the honours of his throne,
He joys not for himself alone;
His meanest servants share their part,
Share in that royal tender heart.

4 Raise, raise, my soul, thy raptur'd sight
With sacred wonder and delight;
Jesus thy own forerunner see
Entered beyond the veil for thee.

5 Loud let the howling tempest yell,
And foaming waves to mountains swell,
No shipwreck can my vessel fear,
Since hope hath fix'd its anchor here.

CCCXII. *The evil Conscience purified by the Blood of Jesus.* Hebrews ix. 13, 14.

1 BLEST be the Lamb, whose blood was spilt
To sprinkle conscience from its guilt;
To ease its pains, to calm its fears,
And purchase grace for future years.

2 Cleans'd by this all-atoning blood,
We joy in free access to God,
The living God, before whose face
Sinners in vain shall seek a place.

3 Rouse thee, my soul, to serve him still
With cordial love, with active zeal:
Serve him, like his own Son divine,
Who made his life the price of thine.

4 Blest Jesus, introduc'd by thee,
The Father's smiling face I see;
And, strengthened by thy grace alone,
These grateful services are done.

5 Then must my debt from day to day
Grow with each service that I pay;
So grows my joy, dear Lord, to be
Thus more and more in debt to thee.

CCCXIII. *Death and Judgment appointed to all.* Hebrews ix. 27.

1 HEAVEN has confirm'd the great decree,
That Adam's race must die:
One general ruin sweeps them down,
And low in dust they lie.

2 Ye living men, the tomb survey,
Where you must quickly dwell;
Hark how the awful summons sounds
In every funeral knell!

3 Once you must die, and once for all
The solemn purport weigh;
For know, that heaven and hell are hung
On that important day.

4 Those eyes, so long in darkness veil'd,
Must wake the Judge to see,
And every word and every thought
Must pass his scrutiny.

5 O may I in the Judge behold
My Saviour and my friend,
And far beyond the reach of death
With all his saints ascend!

CCCXIV. *Christ's second Appearance, &c.* Hebrews ix. 28.

1 BEHOLD the Son of God appears,
And in his flesh our sins he bears;
The victim at God's altar stood
To expiate guilt by groans and blood.

2 But lo, a second time he comes
To shake the earth and rend the tombs;
These heavens before him melt away,
And sun and stars in smoke decay.

3 Yet 'midst this general wreck and dread,
Ye saints, with triumph lift the head;
With glad surprise your Saviour meet,
Who comes to make your bliss complete.

4 My soul, an happiness so great
With pleasing expectation wait;
And, while I dwell upon the thought,
Be earth and all its toys forgot!

5 My Saviour-God, what grace is thine,
Which gives a prospect so divine!
Come blessed day, and teach our tongues
How angels warble out their songs.

CCCXV. *Liberty to enter through the Veil by the Blood of Christ.* Hebrews x. 19—22.

1 APPROACH, ye children of your God;
Favourites of heaven draw near;
Enter the holiest with delight,
Though his own ark be there.

2 Pass through the veil, the Saviour's flesh,
That new and living way;
And Majesty enshrin'd * in love
Shall gentle beams display.

3 Jesus with sin-atoning blood
The throne hath sprinkled o'er;

* Surrounded with.

His fragrant incense spreads its cloud,
And justice flames no more.

4 Approach with boldness and with joy,
But spotless all draw near;
Pure be your lives from every stain,
And every conscience clear.

5 So shall the blessings of his grace
On all your souls distil,
Till each a royal priest appears
On his celestial hill.

CCCXVI. *God's Fidelity to his Promises.* Hebrews x. 23.

1 THE promises I sing,
Which sovereign love hath spoke;
Nor will the eternal King
His words of grace revoke;
They stand secure,
And stedfast still;
Not Zion's hill
Abides so sure.

2 The mountains melt away
When once the Judge appears,
And sun and moon decay,
That measure mortals' years;
But still the same
In radiant lines
The promise shines
Through all the flame.

3 Their harmony shall sound
Through mine attentive ears,
When thunders cleave the ground,
And dissipate the spheres;
'Midst all the shock
Of that dread scene,
I stand serene,
Thy word my rock.

CCCXVII. *The Day approaching, a Motive to Love and Worship.* Hebrews x. 24, 25.

1 THE day approacheth, O my soul,
The great decisive day,
Which from the verge of mortal life
Shall bear thee far away.

2 Another day more awful dawns;
And lo, the Judge appears;

Ye heavens, retire before his face,
And sink, ye darken'd stars.

3 Yet does one short preparing hour,
One precious hour remain;
Rouze thee, my soul, with all thy power,
Nor let it pass in vain.

4 With me my brethren soon must die,
And at that bar appear;
Now be our intercourse improv'd
To mutual comfort here.

5 For this, thy temple, Lord, we throng;
For this, thy board surround;
Here may our service be approv'd,
And in thy presence crown'd.

CCCXVIII. *Abraham's Faith in leaving his Country at the divine Command.* Hebrews xi. 8.

1 NOW let our songs proclaim abroad
The unchanging name of Abram's God;
In him let Abram's children boast,
Their Father's ever-living Lord,
His Shield, his Friend, his great Reward,
Who never can deceive their trust.

2 Call'd by thy voice, with joyful speed
He went, where thou wast pleas'd to lead,
Unknowing in the path he trod;
His land, his kindred, strove in vain
The pious pilgrim to detain,
Propt on the promise of his God.

3 So at thy word the saint foregoes *
Each tender tie, which nature knows,
And hears no other voice but thine;
Marches, where thou shalt point the way,
Where thou shalt pitch his tent, will stay,
And learns his Isaac to resign.

4 At length, still faithful to thy own,
Thou call'st him to a world unknown,
Through paths untrod by mortal feet;
Smiling he owns thy voice in death,
Gives to the air his fleeting breath,
And finds the road to Abram's seat.

* Breaks through.

CCCXIX. *The God of the Patriarchs preparing them a City.* Hebrews xi. 16.

1 I AM thy God, Jehovah said,
To Abram, and his chosen seed;
And still the same relation owns
To each of Abram's faithful sons.

2 Sovereign of heaven, what works of love
So grand a title shall approve?
What splendid gifts will God bestow,
That all its high import may know?

3 Not the rich flocks and herds that feed
Round Abram's tents in Mamre's mead;
Not Joseph's chariot, nor the throne,
Ivory and gold of Solomon.

4 Not Canaan's plains a lot can prove
Proportion'd to Jehovah's love;
Not Zion's sacred mountain, where
His temple glitter'd like a star.

5 O'er Zion's mount, o'er Canaan's plains,
Oppression now, and horror reigns;
And, where the throne of David stood,
His ruin'd sepulchre is view'd.

6 'Tis in the heaven of heavens alone
Thou mak'st thy wondrous friendship known;
A city there thy hand prepares,
Fix'd as thy own eternal years.

7 Long as they reign before thy face,
The blissful nations shall confess,
Thy sovereign love has there bestow'd
Salvation worthy of a God.

CCCXX. *Moses's wise Choice.* Hebrews xi. 26.

1 MY soul, with all thy waken'd powers
Survey the heavenly prize;
Nor let these glittering toys of earth
Allure thy wandering eyes.

2 The splendid crown, which Moses sought,
Still beams around his brow;
Though soon great Pharaoh's sceptred pride,
Was taught by death to bow.

3 The joys and treasures of a day
I cheerfully resign;
Rich in that large immortal store,
Secur'd by grace divine.

4 Let fools my wiser choice deride,
Angels and God approve;
Nor scorn of men, nor rage of hell
My stedfast soul shall move.

5 With ardent eye that bright reward
I daily will survey;
And in the blooming prospect lose
The sorrows of the way.

CCCXXI. *Acting, as seeing him, who is invisible.* Hebrews xi. 27.

1 ETERNAL and immortal King,
Thy peerless* splendors none can bear,
But darkness veils seraphic eyes,
When God with all his lustre's there.

2 Yet faith can pierce the awful gloom,
The great Invisible can see;
And with its tremblings mingle joy
In fix'd regards, great God, to thee.

3 Then every tempting form of sin,
Sham'd in thy presence, disappears;
And all the glowing raptur'd soul
The likeness it contemplates, wears.

4 O ever-conscious to my heart,
Witness to its supreme desire,
Behold it presseth on to thee,
For it hath caught the heavenly fire.

5 This one petition would it urge,
To bear thee ever in its sight;
In life, in death, in worlds unknown,
Its only portion and delight.

CCCXXII. *Subjection to God, the Father of our Spirit.* Hebrews xii. 9.

1 ETERNAL source of life and thought,
Be all beneath thyself forgot!
Whilst thee, great parent-mind, we own
In prostrate homage round thy throne.

2 Whilst in themselves our souls survey
Of thee some faint reflected ray,
They wondring to their Father rise;
His power how vast! His thoughts how wise!

3 Behold us as thine offspring, Lord,
And do not cast us off abhorr'd;

* Unequalled.

Nor let thy hand, so long our joy,
Be rais'd in vengeance to destroy.

4 O may we live before thy face,
The willing subjects of thy grace;
And through each path of duty move
With filial awe, and filial love!

CCCXXIII. *The Immutability of Christ.* Hebrews xiii. 8.

1 WITH transport, Lord, our souls proclaim
The immortal honours of thy name:
Assembled round our Saviour's throne,
We make his ceaseless glories known.

2 High on his Father's royal seat
Our Jesus shone divinely great,
Ere Adam's clay with life was warm'd,
Or Gabriel's nobler spirit form'd.

3 Through all succeeding ages he
The same hath been, the same shall be:
Immortal radiance gilds his head,
While stars and suns wax old and fade.

4 The same his power his flock to guard;
The same his bounty to reward;
The same his faithfulness and love
To saints on earth, and saints above.

5 Let nature change and sink and die;
Jesus shall raise his chosen high,
And fix them near his stable throne,
In glory changeless as his own.

CCCXXIV. *Watching for Souls in the View of the great Account.* Hebrews xiii. 17.

FOR THE ORDINATION OF A MINISTER.

1 LET Zion's watchmen all awake,
And take the alarm they give;
Now let them from the mouth of God
Their solemn charge receive.

2 'Tis not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And fill'd a Saviour's hands.

3 They watch for souls, for which the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego *;
For souls, which must for ever live
In raptures, or in woe.

* Forsake, lay aside.

4 All to the great tribunal haste,
The account to render there;
And shouldst thou strictly mark our faults,
Lord, how should we appear?

5 May they that Jesus, whom they preach,
Their own Redeemer see;
And watch thou daily o'er their souls,
That they may watch for thee.

CCCXXV. *The Christian perfected by divine Grace through Christ.* Hebrews xiii. 20, 21.

1 FATHER of peace, and God of love,
We own thy power to save;
That power, by which our Shepherd rose
Victorious o'er the grave.

2 We triumph in that Shepherd's name,
Still watchful for our good;
Who brought the eternal covenant down,
And seal'd it with his blood.

3 So may thy Spirit seal my soul,
And mould it to thy will;
That my fond heart no more may stray,
But keep thy covenant still.

4 Still may we gain superior strength,
And press with vigour on,
Till full perfection crown our hopes,
And fix us near thy throne.

CCCXXVI. *Christians begotten to God as the First-Fruits of his Creatures.* James i. 18.

1 NOW to that sovereign grace,
Whence all our comforts spring,
Let the whole new-begotten race
Their cheerful praises bring.

2 His will first made the choice;
His word the change hath wrought;
In him, our Father, we rejoice,
Nor be the name forgot.

3 Lord, may this matchless love,
Which thy own children see,
Make us from all thy creatures prove
As the first-fruits to thee.

4 Sacred to thee alone
Be all these powers of mine,
Then in the noblest sense my own,
When most entirely thine.

CCCXXVII. *Looking into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continuing in it.* James i. 25.

1 BEHOLD the glass the gospel lends,
That men themselves may view!
How free from stain its surface is!
How polish'd, and how true!

2 Behold that wise, that perfect law,
Which noblest freedom gives!
O may it all our souls refine,
And sanctify our lives!

3 Not with a transient glance survey'd,
And in an hour forgot,
But deep inscrib'd on every heart,
To reign o'er every thought.

4 Great Author of each perfect gift,
Thy sovereign grace display,
That these rebellious roving powers
May hearken and obey.

5 Inspir'd by thee, our feeble souls
Shall pass victorious on;
As the faint dawning light improves
To all the blaze of noon.

CCCXXVIII. *James's Advice to Sinners.* James iv. 7, 8.

1 YE sinners, bend your stubborn necks
Beneath the yoke divine;
In low submission bow ye down
Before his sacred shrine.

2 In pious strains your follies mourn,
And seek his injur'd grace;
And wait with broken bleeding hearts
The openings of his face.

3 Resist the tempter's fierce attacks,
And he shall speed his flight:
Draw near to God, and his embrace
Shall fold you with delight.

4 Ye sinners, cleanse your spotted hands,
And purge your hearts from sin;
Here fix your long-divided views,
And peace shall reign within.

5 Blest Saviour, draw us by thy love,
And fix us by thy power;
When we have felt these sweet constraints,
Our souls shall rove no more.

CCCXXIX. *The Vanity of worldly Schemes inferred from the Uncertainty of Life.* James iv. 13, 14, 15.

1 TO-MORROW, Lord, is thine,
Lodg'd in thy sovereign hand;
And, if its sun arise and shine,
It shines by thy command.

2 The present moment flies,
And bears our life away;
O make thy servants truly wise,
That they may live to-day.

3 Since on this winged hour
Eternity is hung,
Waken by thine Almighty power
The aged and the young.

4 One thing demands our care;
O be it still pursu'd!
Lest, slighted once, the season fair
Should never be renew'd.

5 To Jesus may we fly
Swift as the morning light,
Lest life's young golden beams should die
In sudden endless night!

CCCXXX. *Rejoicing in an unseen Saviour.* 1 Peter i. 8.

1 MINE inward joys, suppress'd too long,
Ecstatic burst into a song:
From Christ, though now unseen, they rise
And reach his throne beyond the skies.

2 His glories strike the wondering sight
Of all the first-born sons of light;
Beyond the Seraphim they shine,
Unrivall'd all, and all divine.

3 Yet mortal worms his friendship boast,
And make his saving name their trust:
Jesus, my Lord, I know him well;
He rescu'd me from death and hell.

4 This sinful heart from God estrang'd
His new-creating power hath chang'd;
And, mingling with each secret thought,
Maintains the work, which first it wrought.

5 He gives to see his Father's face;
He gives my soul to thrive in grace;
And brings the views of glory down,
The beamings of my heavenly crown.

6 Thus entertain'd, while here below
Unspeakable my transports grow;
New joys in swift succession roll,
And glory fills my silent soul.

CCCXXXI. *The Heart purified to Love unfeigned by the Spirit.* 1 Peter i. 22.

1 GREAT Spirit of immortal love,
Vouchsafe our frozen hearts to move;
With ardour strong these breasts inflame
To all that own a Saviour's name.

2 Still let the heavenly fire endure
Fervent and vigorous, true and pure:
Let every heart and every hand
Join in the dear fraternal band*.

3 Celestial dove, descend and bring
The smiling blessings on thy wing;
And make us taste those sweets below,
Which in the blissful mansions grow.

CCCXXXII. *Tasting that the Lord is Gracious.* 1 Peter ii. 3.

1 YES, it is sweet to taste his grace,
Who bought us with his blood;
My soul prefers the relish still
To all created good.

2 O! how I love that vital word,
Which taught me first to live;
Thirst for that uncorrupted milk,
That I may grow and thrive!

3 All-gracious Lord, instruct us more
Thy saving gifts to know:
And let our inmost hearts rejoice,
That thou hast lov'd us so.

4 Open thy stores with liberal hand,
That we may daily feast;
And let each dying soul around
The sweet salvation taste.

CCCXXXIII. *Coming to Christ as a living Stone.* 1 Peter ii. 4, 5.

1 WITH ecstasy of joy
Extol his glorious name,
Who rais'd the spacious earth,
And rais'd our ruin'd frame:
He built the church
Who built the sky,

* Brotherly union.

Shout and exalt
His honours high.

2 See the foundation laid
By power and love divine;
Jesus, his first-born Son,
How bright his glories shine!
Low he descends,
In dust He lies,
That from his tomb
A church might rise.

3 But he for ever lives,
Not for himself alone;
Each saint new life derives
From this mysterious stone;
His influence darts
Through every soul,
And in one house
Unites the whole.

4 To him with joy we move;
In him cemented stand;
The living temple grows,
And owns the founder's hand:
That structure, Lord,
Still higher raise,
Louder to sound
Its builder's praise.

5 Descend, and shed abroad
The tokens of thy grace,
And with more radiant beams
Let glory fill the place;
Our joyful souls
Shall prostrate fall,
And own, our God
Is all in all.

CCCXXXIV. *Christ the Corner Stone.* 1 Peter ii. 6. compared with Isaiah xxviii. 16, 17.

1 LORD, dost thou shew a corner-stone
For us to build our hopes upon,
That the fair edifice may rise
Sublime in light beyond the skies?

2 We own the work of sovereign love:
Nor death nor hell those hopes shall move,
Which fix'd on this foundation stand,
Laid by thy own Almighty hand.

3 Thy people long this stone have tried,
And all the powers of hell defied;
Floods of temptation beat in vain;
Well doth this rock the house sustain.

4 When storms of wrath around prevail,
Whirlwind and thunder, fire and hail;
'Tis here our trembling souls shall hide,
And here securely they abide.

5 While they that scorn this precious stone,
Fond of some quicksand of their own,
Borne down by weighty vengeance die,
And buried deep in ruin lie.

CCCXXXV. *Christ precious to the Believer.* 1 Peter ii. 7.

1 JESUS, I love thy charming name;
'Tis music to mine ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud,
That earth and heaven should hear.

2 Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport, and my trust:
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.

3 All my capacious powers can wish
In thee doth richly meet:
Nor to mine eyes is light so dear,
Nor friendship half so sweet.

4 Thy grace still dwells upon my heart,
And sheds its fragrance there;
The noblest balm of all its wounds,
The cordial of its care.

5 I'll speak the honours of thy name
With my last labouring breath;
Then speechless clasp thee in mine arms,
The antidote of death.

CCCXXXVI. *Noah preserved in the Ark, and the Believer in Christ.* 1 Peter iii. 20, 21.

1 THE deluge, at the Almighty's call,
In what impetuous streams it fell!
Swallow'd the mountains in its rage,
And swept a guilty world to hell.

2 In vain the tallest sons of pride
Fled from the close-pursuing wave;
Nor could their mightiest towers defend,
Nor swiftness 'scape, nor courage save.

3 How dire the wreck! How loud the roar!
How shrill the universal cry
Of millions in the last despair,
Re-echo'd from the lowring sky!

4 Yet Noah, humble happy saint,
Surrounded with the chosen few,
Sat in his ark, secure from fear,
And sang the grace that steer'd him through.

5 So I may sing, in Jesus safe,
While storms of vengeance round me fall,
Conscious how high my hopes are fix'd,
Beyond what shakes this earthly ball.

6 Enter thine ark, while patience waits,
Nor ever quit that sure retreat;
Then the wide flood, which buries earth,
Shall waft thee to a fairer seat.

7 Nor wreck nor ruin there is seen:
There not a wave of trouble rolls;
But the bright rainbow round the throne *
Seals endless life to all their souls.

CCCXXXVII. *The Ungodly warned of their final Appearance.*
1 Peter iv. 18.

1 BEHOLD God's great incarnate Son
In majesty comes flying down:
Hark! for his trumpet's awful sound
Awakes the dead, and cleaves the ground.

2 So solemn shall the judgment be,
And so severe the scrutiny †,
That, by his merit tried alone,
The saint himself would be undone.

3 Where then, ye sons of Belial ‡, where
Will your astonish'd souls appear?
How will ye shun his piercing sight?
Or how resist his matchless might?

4 Up to the pointed mountains fly,
And gain the confines § of the sky;
There shall ye meet celestial fire,
While mountains melt before his ire ‖.

5 Call on the rending earth to save,
And at its centre search a grave;
The Judge shall well discern thee there,
And drag thee trembling to his bar.

* Rev. iv. 3. † Examination. ‡ Rebellious men.
§ Borders. ‖ Anger.

6 Deck thee around with fraud and lies,
And put on every fair disguise;
Soon shall thy painted form be known
Amidst ten thousand of his own.

7 Gird thee in arms his wrath to oppose,
And league with millions of his foes;
Soon would the rebel-band expire,
Like crackling thorns amidst the fire.

8 One only way may yet be found;
Submissive bow ye to the ground;
His cross a refuge will afford
From all the terrors of his sword.

CCCXXXVIII. *Humbling ourselves under God's mighty Hand.*
1 Peter v. 6.

1 BENEATH thy mighty hand, O God,
Our souls we prostrate low;
Shine forth with gentle radiant beams,
That we thy name may know.

2 Thy hand this various frame produc'd,
And still supports it well;
That hand, with justice and with ease,
Might smite our souls to hell.

3 Conscious of meanness and of guilt,
We in the dust would lie;
Stretch forth thy condescending arm,
And lift the humble high.

4 So in the temples of thy grace
We'll sovereign mercy own,
And, when we shine above the stars,
Extol thy grace alone.

5 The more thou raise such sinful dust,
The lower would it fall;
For less than nothing, Lord, are we,
And thou art all in all.

CCCXXXIX. *The same.*
FOR A FAST-DAY.

1 OUR souls with reverence, Lord, bow down
Struck by the splendors of thy throne;
Humbled, while in thy house we stand,
Beneath thy great tremendous hand.

2 That hand, which bears the steady pole,
While nature's wheels unwearied roll;
That hand, which gives each creature food,
And fills the world with various good.

3 That hand, which pierc'd thy darling son
To expiate crimes, that we had done:
That hand, which scatters grace abroad
To turn thy foes to sons of God.

4 But O! with what distracted rage
Have we presum'd that hand to engage!
And, while long patience hath been shewn,
Struggled to force thy vengeance down!

5 Here might thy wrath begin to flame,
And vindicate thine injur'd name;
Till the red thunders of thy hand
Had dealt destruction round our land.

6 With humble hearts our God we meet:
O raise the suppliants at thy feet!
And let that glorious arm this day
Embrace the rebels it might slay!

CCCXL. *God's Care a Remedy for ours.* 1 Peter v. 7.

1 HOW gentle God's commands!
How kind his precepts are!
"Come, cast your burdens on the Lord,
"And trust his constant care."

2 While providence supports,
Let saints securely dwell;
That hand, which bears all nature up,
Shall guide his children well.

3 Why should this anxious load
Press down your weary mind?
Haste to your heavenly Father's throne,
And sweet refreshment find.

4 His goodness stands approv'd
Down to the present day;
I'll drop my burden at his feet,
And bear a song away.

CCCXLI. *Establishment in Religion from the God of all Grace.* 1 Peter v. 10, 11.

1 HOW rich thy favours, God of grace!
How various and divine!
Full as the ocean they are pour'd,
And bright as heaven they shine.

2 He to eternal glory calls,
And leads the wondrous way
To his own palace, where he reigns
In uncreated day.

3 Jesus, the herald of his love,
Displays the radiant prize,
And shews the purchase of his blood
To our admiring eyes.

4 He perfects what his hand begins,
And stone on stone he lays;
Till firm and fair the building rise,
A temple to his praise.

5 The songs of everlasting years
That mercy shall attend,
Which leads, through sufferings of an hour,
To joys, that never end.

CCCXLII. *The Circumstances of Christ's second Appearing.* 2 Peter iii. 11, 12.

1 MY wakened soul, extend thy wings
Beyond the verge of mortal things;
See this vain world in smoke decay,
And rocks and mountains melt away.

2 Behold the fiery deluge roll
Through heaven's wide arch from pole to pole:
Pale sun, no more thy lustre boast;
Tremble and fall, ye starry host.

3 This wreck of nature all around,
The angel's shout, the trumpet's sound,
Loud the descending Judge proclaim,
And echo his tremendous name.

4 Children of Adam, all appear
With reverence round his awful bar;
For, as his lips pronounce, ye go
To endless bliss, or endless woe.

5 Lord, to mine eyes this scene display
Frequent through each revolving day,
And let thy grace my soul prepare
To meet its full redemption there.

CCCXLIII. *The Importance of being prepared for Christ's second Appearing.* 2 Peter iii. 14.

1 "BEHOLD I come!" the Saviour cries,
"With winged speed I come;
"My voice shall call your souls away
"To their eternal home.

2 "Awake ye sons of sloth, awake;
"Your vain amusements cease,
"And strive with your united powers,
"That ye be found in peace.

3 " Seize the blest hour with ardent haste,
" Nor slight this peaceful word,
" Lest your affrighted souls in vain
" Fly from my flaming sword.

4 " Happy the man, whose ready heart
" Obeys the sacred call;
" And shelters in my covenant grace
" His everlasting all."

5 Blest Jesus, whose all-searching eye
My inmost powers can see,
Dost thou not know my willing soul
Hath lodg'd that all with thee?

6 These eager eyes thy signal wait;
My dear Redeemer, come:
I rove a weary pilgrim here,
And long to be at home.

CCCXLIV. *Growing in Grace, &c.* 2 Peter iii. 18.

1 PRAISE to thy name, eternal God,
For all the grace thou shed'st abroad;
For all thine influence from above
To warm our souls with sacred love.

2 Blest be thy hand, which from the skies
Brought down this plant of paradise,
And gave its heavenly glories birth,
To deck this wilderness of earth.

3 But why does that celestial flower
Open and thrive, and shine no more?
Where are its balmy odours fled?
And why reclines its beauteous head?

4 Too plain alas! the langnor shews
The unkindly soil in which it grows;
Where the black frosts and beating storm
Wither and rend its tender form.

5 Unchanging sun! thy beams display
To drive the frosts and storms away;
Make all thy potent virtues known
To cheer a plant so much thy own.

6 And thou, blest Spirit! deign to blow
Fresh gales of heaven on shrubs below;
So shall they grow, and breathe abroad
A fragrance grateful to our God.

CCCXLV. *Experimental Knowledge communicated.* 1 John i. 1—3.

1 JESUS, mine advocate above,
Let me not hear of thee alone,
But make the wonders of thy love
By deep experience sweetly known.

2 On thee my soul would fix its eye;
My lips would taste thy heavenly grace;
Then would I raise thine honours high,
And teach a thousand tongues thy praise.

3 The sacred flame from heart to heart
Should with a rapid progress run;
Till each in God could boast his part,
Through sweet communion with his Son.

4 Thus may the servants of the Lord
Feel the salvation they proclaim;
And thus may crouds receive the word,
And echo back the Saviour's name!

CCCXLVI. *Communion with God and Christ.* 1 John i. 3.

1 OUR heavenly Father calls,
And Christ invites us near;
With both our friendship shall be sweet,
And our communion dear.

2 God pities all my griefs;
He pardons every day;
Almighty to protect my soul,
And wise to guide my way.

3 How large his bounties are!
What various stores of good,
Diffus'd from my Redeemer's hand,
And purchas'd with his blood!

4 Jesus, my living head,
I bless thy faithful care;
Mine advocate before the throne,
And my forerunner there.

5 Here fix, my roving heart;
Here wait, my warmest love,
Till the communion be complete
In nobler scenes above.

CCCXLVII. *The Privileges of Saints by the Blood of Jesus.* 1 John i. 7.

1 MY various powers, awake
To sound redeeming grace;
To him, that wash'd us in his blood,
Ascribe eternal praise.

2 What though our guilt appears
Dy'd in a crimson grain?
The stream, that flows from Jesus' side,
Shall purge away the stain.

3 'Midst all our various forms
We in this centre meet;
Our hearts, cemented by his blood,
Shall taste communion sweet.

4 Then let us walk in light,
Like Christ, whose name we wear;
And, as the pledge of endless bliss,
Our Father's image bear.

CCCXLVIII. *The Blood of Christ cleansing from all Sin.*
1 John i. 7.

1 MY sins, alas! how foul the stains!
How deep, and O! how wide!
O'er my polluted soul they spread,
In double crimson dy'd.

2 How shall I stand before that God,
In whose all-piercing sight,
Some shades of darkness seem to veil
The purest sons of light?

3 Where shall I wash these spots away,
And make my nature clean,
Since drops of penitential grief
Are tinctur'd still with sin?

4 Behold a torrent all divine
Flows from the Saviour's side,
And strangely bears a crystal stream
Amidst the purple tide*.

5 Here will I bathe my spotted soul,
And make it pure and fair;
Till not the eye of God discern
One foul pollution there.

6 Then, drest in robes of snowy white,
I'll join the shining band,
And learn new anthems to the Lamb,
While round his throne we stand.

*Referring to the blood and water, that came out of Christ's wounded side. John xix. 34.

CCCXLIX. *Having the Son, and having Life in him.* 1 John v. 12.

1 O HAPPY christian, who can boast,
"The Son of God is mine!"
Happy, though humbled in the dust;
Rich in this gift divine!

2 He lives the life of heaven below,
And shall for ever live;
Eternal streams from Christ shall flow,
And endless vigour give.

3 That life we ask with bended knee,
Nor will the Lord deny;
Nor will celestial mercy see
Its humble suppliants die.

4 That life obtain'd, for praise alone
We wish continu'd breath;
And taught by blest experience own,
That praise can live in death.

CCCL. *Christ the First and the Last, humbled to Death, and exalted to an eternal Triumph over it.* Revelation i. 17, 18.

1 WHAT mysteries, Lord, in thee combine!
Jesus, once mortal, yet divine;
The first, the last; the end, the head;
The source of life among the dead.

2 O love, beyond the stretch of thought!
What matchless wonders hath it wrought!
My faith, while she the grace declares,
Trembles beneath the load she bears.

3 Hail, royal conqueror o'er the grave,
Tender to pity, strong to save!
For ever live, for ever reign,
And prosperous may thy throne remain!

4 Thy saints, obedient to thy word,
With humble joy surround thy board;
And, long as time pursues its race,
Proclaim thy death, and shout thy grace.

5 In the full choir, where angels join
Their harps of melody divine,
Thy death inspires a song of praise,
New through thy life's eternal days.

CCCLI. *The Keys of Death and the unseen World in Christ's Hand.* Revelation i. 18.

1 HAIL to the prince of life and peace,
Who holds the keys of death and hell!

The spacious world unseen is his,
And sovereign power becomes him well.

2 In shame and torment once he died;
But now he lives for evermore:
Bow down, ye saints, around his seat,
And, all ye angel-bands, adore.

3 So live for ever, glorious Lord,
To crush thy foes, and guard thy friends;
While all thy chosen tribes rejoice,
That thy dominion never ends.

4 Worthy thy hand to hold the keys,
Guided by wisdom, and by love;
Worthy to rule o'er mortal life,
O'er worlds below, and worlds above.

5 When death thy servants shall invade,
When powers of hell thy church annoy,
Controul'd by thee, their rage shall help
The cause, they labour'd to destroy.

6 For ever reign, victorious King:
Wide through the earth thy name be known;
And call my longing soul to sing
Sublimer anthems near thy throne!

CCCLII. *Christ's Care of Ministers and Churches.* Revelation ii. 1.

1 WE bless the eternal source of light,
Who makes the stars to shine;
And, through this dark beclouded world,
Diffuseth rays divine.

2 We bless the churches, Sovereign King!
Whose golden lamps we are;
Fix'd in the temples of his love
To shine with radiance fair.

3 Still be our purity preserv'd;
Still fed with oil and flame;
And in deep characters inscrib'd
Our heavenly Master's name.

4 Then, while between our ranks he walks,
And all our state surveys,
His smiles shall with new lustre deck
The people of his praise.

CCCLIII. *The Christian Warrior animated and crowned.* Revelation ii. 10.

1 HARK! 'tis our heavenly leader's voice
From his triumphant seat:

'Midst all the war's tumultuous noise,
How powerful and how sweet!

2 "Fight on, my faithful band," he cries,
"Nor fear the mortal blow:
"Who first in such a warfare dies
"Shall speediest victory know.

3 "I have my days of combat known,
"And in the dust was laid;
"But thence I mounted to my throne,
"And glory crowns my head.

4 "That throne, that glory, you shall share;
"My hands the crown shall give;
"And you the sparkling honours wear,
"While God himself shall live."

5 Lord, 'tis enough; our bosoms glow
With courage, and with love;
Thy hand shall bear thy soldiers through,
And raise their heads above.

6 My soul, while deaths beset me round,
Erects her ardent eyes,
And longs, through some illustrious wound,
To rush and seize the prize.

CCCLIV. *The Pillar in God's heavenly Temple, with its Inscription.*
Revelation iii. 12.

1 ALL-HAIL, victorious Saviour, hail!
I bow to thy command;
And own, that David's royal key
Well fits thy sovereign hand.

2 Open the treasures of thy love,
And shed thy gifts abroad;
Unveil to my rejoicing eyes
The temple of my God.

3 There as a pillar let me stand
On an eternal base*;
Up-rear'd by thine Almighty hand,
And polish'd by thy grace.

4 There deep engraven let me bear
The title of my God;
And mark the new Jerusalem,
As my secure abode.

5 In lasting characters inscribe
Thy own beloved name;

* Foundation.

That endless ages there may read
The great Emanuel's claim.

6 Lead on, my general; I defy
What earth or hell can do;
Thy conduct, and this glorious hope,
Shall bear thy soldier through.

CCCLV. *God's Covenant unchangeable; or, The Rainbow round about the Throne.* Revelation iv. 3. compared with Genesis ix. 13—17.

1 SUPREME of Beings, with delight
Our eyes survey this heavenly sight;
And trace with admiration sweet
The beaming splendors of thy feet.

2 Jasper and sapphire strive in vain
To paint the glories of thy train;
Thy robes all stream eternal light,
Too powerful for a cherub's sight.

3 Yet round thy throne the rainbow shines,
Fair emblem of thy kind designs;
Bright pledge, that speaks thy covenant sure
Long as thy kingdom shall endure.

4 No more shall deluges of woe
Thy new-created world o'erflow;
Jesus, our Sun, his beams displays,
And gilds the clouds with beauteous rays.

5 No gems so bright, no forms so fair;
Mercy and truth still triumph there:
Thy saints shall bless the peaceful sign,
When stars and suns forget to shine.

6 E'en here, while storms and gloomy shade,
And horrors all the scene o'erspread,
Faith views the throne with piercing eye,
And boasts, the rainbow still is nigh.

CCCLVI. *Victory over Satan by the Blood of the Lamb, and the Word of the Testimony of his Servants.* Revelation xii. 11.

1 SEE the old dragon from his throne
Sink with enormous ruin down!
Banish'd from heaven, and doom'd to dwell
Deep in the fiery gloom of hell!

2 Ye heavens with all your hosts, rejoice;
Ye saints, in consort lend your voice:
Approach your Lord's victorious seat,
And tread the foe beneath your feet.

3 But whence a conquest so divine
Gain'd by such feeble hands as mine?
Or whence can sinful mortals boast
O'er Satan and his rebel-host?

4 'Twas from thy blood, thou slaughter'd Lamb,
That all our palms and triumphs came;
Thy cross, thy spear, inflicts the stroke,
By which the monster's head is broke.

5 Thy faithful word our hope maintains
Through all our combat and our pains;
The accents of thy heavenly breath
Thy soldiers bear through wounds and death.

6 Triumphant Lamb, in worlds unknown,
With transport round thy radiant throne,
Thy happy legions, all complete,
Shall lay their laurels at thy feet.

CCCLVII. *The Song of Moses and the Lamb.* Revelation xv. 3.

1 ISRAEL, the tribute bring
To God's victorious name;
The song of Moses sing,
Of Moses and the Lamb:
Improve his lays* ;
The theme exceeds,
And nobler deeds
Demand our praise.

2 The prince of hell arose
With impious rage and pride,
And 'midst our numerous foes
Our feeble power defy'd;
"I will o'ertake,
"And I destroy,
"My hand with joy
"Shall force thee back."

3 Thy hand, Almighty Lord,
Thy trembling Israel saves;
Thine unresisted word
Divides the threatening waves:
Thy hosts pass o'er;
The foe o'erthrown
Sinks like a stone
To rise no more.

4 Our triumphs we prepare,
And cheerful anthems raise:

* Songs of praise.

Jehovah's arm made bare
Demands immortal praise
And while we sing,
Ye shores, proclaim
His wondrous name,
Ye desarts, ring!

5 Through all the wilderness
Thy presence, Lord, shall lead;
And bring us to the place,
Thy sovereign love decreed;
Those blissful plains,
Where all around,
Hosannas sound,
And transport reigns.

CCCLVIII. *The Conquest of Death and Grief by Views of the heavenly State.* Revelation xxi. 4.

1 LIFT up, ye saints, your weeping eyes,
Suspend your sorrows and your sighs;
Turn all your groans to joyful songs,
Which Jesus dictates to your tongues.

2 Thus saith the Saviour from his throne;
"Behold all former things are gone,
"Past like an anxious dream away,
"Chas'd by the golden beams of day!

3 "See, in celestial pomp array'd,
"A new-created world display'd;
"Mark with what light its prospects shine!
"How grand, how various, how divine!

4 "There my own gentle hand shall dry
"Each tear from each o'erflowing eye,
"And open wide my friendly breast
"To lull the weary soul to rest.

5 "No more shall grief assail your heart,
"No boding fear, no piercing smart;
"For ever there my people dwell
"Beyond the range of death and hell."

6 Vain king of terrors, boast no more
Thine ancient wide-extended power;
Each saint in life with Christ his head
Shall reign, when thou thyself art dead.

CCCLIX. *Christ, the Root and Offspring of David, and the Morning Star.* Revelation xxii. 16.

1 ALL HAIL, mysterious king!
Hail, David's ancient root!

Thou Righteous Branch, which thence did spring
To give the nations fruit.

2 Our weary souls shall rest
Beneath thy grateful shade;
Our thirsting lips salvation taste;
Our fainting hearts are glad.

3 Fair Morning-star, arise,
With living glories bright,
And pour on these awakening eyes
A flood of sacred light.

4 The horrid gloom is fled,
Pierc'd by thy beauteous ray;
Shine, and our wandering footsteps lead
To everlasting day.

CCCLX. *Christ's Invitations echoed back, &c.* Revelation xxii. 17.

1 HOW free the fountain flows
Of endless life and joy!
That spring, which no confinement knows,
Whose waters never cloy!

2 How sweet the accents sound
From the Redeemer's tongue!
"Assemble, all ye nations round,
"In one obedient throng.

3 "The Spirit bears the call
"To all the distant lands;
"The church, the bride, reflects it back,
"While Jesus waiting stands.

4 "Ho, every thirsty soul,
"Approach the sacred spring;
"Drink, and your fainting spirits cheer;
"Renew the draught, and sing.

5 "Let all, that will, approach;
"The water freely take;
"Free from my opening heart it flows
"Your raging thirst to slake."

6 With thankful hearts we come
To taste the offered grace;
And call on all that hear to join
The trial, and the praise.

CCCLXI. *The Christian rejoicing in the Views of Death and Judgment.* Revelation xxii. 20.

1 "BEHOLD I come," the Saviour cries,
"On wings of love I fly:"
"So come, dear Lord," my soul replies,
"And bring salvation nigh."

2 Come, loose these bonds of flesh and sin:
Come, end my pains and cares;
Bear me to thy serene abode
Beyond the clouds and stars.

3 I greet the messengers of death,
By which thou call'st me home;
But doubly greet that joyful hour,
When thou thyself shalt come.

4 Come, plead thy Father's injur'd cause,
And make thy glory shine;
Come, rouse thy servants mouldering dust,
And their whole frame refine.

5 O come amidst the angelic hosts
Their humble name to own;
And bear the full assembly back
To dwell around thy throne.

6 With winged speed, Redeemer dear,
Bring on the illustrious day:
Come, lest our spirits droop and faint
Beneath thy long delay.

# HYMNS

ON

# PARTICULAR OCCASIONS

AND

IN UNCOMMON MEASURES.

## CCCLXII. *A Morning Hymn, to be used at awaking and rising.*

1 AWAKE, my soul, to meet the day;
Unfold thy drowsy eyes,
And burst the ponderous chain that loads
Thine active faculties.

2 God's guardian-shield was round me spread
In my defenceless sleep:
Let him have all my waking hours,
Who doth my slumbers keep.

3 (The work of each immortal soul
Attentive care demands;
Think then what painful labours wait
The faithful pastor's hands.)

4 My moments fly with winged pace,
And swift my hours are hurl'd;
And death with rapid march comes on
To unveil the eternal world.

5 I for this hour must give account
Before God's awful throne:
Let not this hour neglected pass,
As thousands more have done.

6 Pardon, O God, my former sloth,
And arm my soul with grace;
As, rising now, I seal my vows
To prosecute thy ways.

7 Bright Sun of Righteousness, arise;
Thy radiant beams display,
And guide my dark bewilder'd soul
To everlasting day.

CCCLXIII. *An Evening Hymn, to be used when composing one's self to Sleep.*

1 INTERVAL of grateful shade,
Welcome to my weary head!
Welcome slumbers to mine eyes,
Tir'd with glaring vanities!
My great Master still allows
Needful periods of repose.
By my heavenly Father blest,
Thus I give my powers to rest;
Heavenly Father! gracious name!
Night and day his love the same:
Far be each suspicious thought,
Every anxious care forgot:
Thou, my ever-bounteous God,
Crown'st my days with various good:
Thy kind eye, that cannot sleep,
These defenceless hours shall keep:
Blest vicissitude to me!
Day and night I'm still with thee.

2 What though downy slumbers flee,
Strangers to my couch and me!
Sleepless well I know to rest,
Lodg'd within my Father's breast.
While the empress of the night
Scatters mild her silver light;
While the vivid planets stray
Various through their mystic way;
While the stars unnumber'd roll
Round the ever-constant pole;
Far above the spangled skies
All my soul to God shall rise;
'Midst the silence of the night
Mingling with those angels bright,
Whose harmonious voices raise
Ceaseless love and ceaseless praise;
Through the throng his gentle ear
Shall my tuneless accents hear:
From on high doth He impart
Secret comfort to my heart.
He in these serenest hours
Guides my intellectual powers,
And his Spirit doth diffuse,
Sweeter far than midnight dews;
Lifting all my thoughts above
On the wings of faith and love.

Blest alternative to me,
Thus to sleep, or wake, with thee!

3 What if death my sleep invade!
Should I be of death afraid?
Whilst encircled by thine arm,
Death may strike, but cannot harm.
What if beams of opening day
Shine around my breathless clay!
Brighter visions from on high
Shall regale my mental eye.
Tender friends awhile may mourn
Me from their embraces torn;
Dearer better friends I have
In the realms beyond the grave.
See the guardian-angels nigh
Wait to waft my soul on high!
See the golden gates display'd!
See the crown to grace my head!
See a flood of sacred light,
Which no more shall yield to night!
Transitory world, farewel!
Jesus calls with him to dwell.
With thy heavenly presence blest,
Death is life, and labour rest.
Welcome sleep, or death to me,
Still secure, for still with thee.

CCCXLIV. *On Recovery from Sickness, during which, much of the divine Favour had been experienced.*

1 MY God, thy service well demands
The remnant of my days;
Why was this fleeting breath renew'd,
But to renew thy praise?

2 Thine arms of everlasting love
Did this weak frame sustain,
When life was hovering o'er the grave,
And nature sunk with pain.

3 Thou, when the pains of death were felt,
Didst chase the fears of hell;
And teach my pale and quivering lips
Thy matchless grace to tell.

4 Calmly I bow'd my fainting head
On thy dear faithful breast;
Pleas'd to obey my Father's call
To his eternal rest.

5 Into thy hands, my Saviour-God,
Did I my soul resign,
In firm dependence on that truth,
Which made salvation mine.

6 Back from the borders of the grave
At thy command I come:
Nor would I urge a speedier flight
To my celestial home.

7 Where thou determin'st mine abode,
There would I chuse to be;
For in thy presence death is life,
And earth is heaven with thee.

CCCLXV. *The last Words of David.* 2 Samuel xxiii. 1—8*.

1 THUS hath the son of Jesse said,
When Israel's God had rais'd his head
To high imperial sway:
Struck with his last poetic fire,
Zion's sweet Psalmist tun'd his lyre
To this harmonious lay.

2 Thus dictates Israel's sacred rock:
Thus hath the God of Jacob spoke
By my responsive tongue:
Behold the Just One over men
Commencing his religious reign,
Great subject of my song!

3 So gently shines with genial ray
The unclouded lamp of rising day,
And cheers the tender flowers,
When midnight's soft diffusive rain
Hath bless'd the gardens and the plain
With kind refreshing showers.

4 Shall not my house this honour boast?
My soul the eternal covenant trust,
Well-order'd still and sure?
There all my hopes and wishes meet:
In death I call its blessings sweet,
And feel its bond secure.

5 The sons of Belial shall not spring,
Who spurn at heaven's anointed King,
And scorn his high command:

* Agreeable to the ingenious metrical version of the learned Dr. Richard Grey.

Though wide the briars infest the ground,
And the sharp-pointed thorns around
Defy a tender hand;

6 A dreadful warrior shall appear
With iron arms, and massy spear,
And tear them from their place:
Touch'd with the lightning of his ire,
At once they kindle into fire,
And vanish in the blaze.

### CCCLXVI. *A Military Ode.* Psalm cxlix.

*Probably composed by David, to be sung when his Army was marching out to War against the Remnant of the devoted Nations of Canaan, and first went up in solemn Procession to the House of God at Jerusalem, there, as it were, to consecrate the Arms, which he put into their Hands. The Beds referred to, Ver. 5, where probably the Couches, on which they lay at the Banquet attending their Sacrifices; which gives a noble Sense to a Passage, on any other Interpretation hardly intelligible.*

1 O PRAISE ye the Lord, prepare a new song,
And let all his saints in full consort join:
Ye tribes all assemble the feast to prolong,
In solemn procession with music divine.

2 O Israel, in him that made thee rejoice;
Let all Zion's sons exult in their King;
While to martial dances you join a glad voice,
Your lutes, harps and timbrels in harmony bring.

3 The Lord in his saints still finds his delight;
Salvation from him the meek shall adorn;
They well may be joyful, sustain'd by his might,
And crown'd by his favour may lift up their horn.

4 Let carpets be spread, and banquets prepar'd
Those altars around, whence incense ascends;
Whilst anthems of glory through Salem are heard,
And God, whom we worship, indulgent attends.

5 Then as your hearts bound with music and wine,
Inspir'd by the God, who reigns in the place:
Unsheath all your weapons, and bright let them shine,
And brandish your faulchions, while chaunting his praise.

6 Then march to the field; the heathen defy;
And scatter his wrath on nations around:
Like angels of vengeance your swords lift on high,
And boast that Jehovah commissions the wound.

7 Their generals subdued your triumphs shall grace,
And loaded with chains their kings shall be brought;

On the necks shall ye trample of Canaan's proud race,
And all their last remnant for slaughter be sought.

8 No rage of your own such rigour demands;
A sentence divine your arms must fulfil:
Of old He this vengeance consign'd to your hands,
And in sacred volumes recorded his will.

9 This honour, ye saints, appointed for you,
All-grateful receive, and faithful obey;
And, while this dread pleasure resistless ye do,
Still make his high praises the song of the day.

CCCLXVII. *For the Thanksgiving-Day for the Peace, April* 25, 1749.

1 NOW let our songs address the God of peace,
Who bids the tumult of the battle cease:
The pointed spears to pruning-hooks he bends,
And the broad faulchion in the plow-share ends.
His powerful word unites contending nations
In kind embrace, and friendly salutations.

2 Britain, adore the guardian of thy state;
Who, high on his celestial throne elate,
Still watchful o'er thy safety and repose,
Frown'd on the counsels of thy haughtiest foes;
Thy coast secur'd from every dire invasion
Of fire and sword and spreading desolation.

3 When rebel-bands with desperate madness join'd,
He wafted o'er deliverance with his wind;
Drove back the tide, that delug'd half our land,
And curb'd their fury with his mightier hand:
Till dreadful slaughter, and the last confusion
Taught those audacious sinners their delusion.

4 He gave our fleets to triumph o'er the main,
And scatter terrors 'cross wide ocean's plain:
Opposing leaders trembled at the sight,
Nor found their safety in the attempted flight;
Taught by their bonds, how vainly they pretended
Those to distress, whom Israel's God defended.

5 Fierce storms were summon'd up in Britain's aid,
And meagre famine hostile lands o'erspread;
By sufferings bow'd their conquests they release,
Nor scorn the overtures of equal peace:
Contending powers congratulate the blessing,
Joint hymns of gratitude to heaven addressing.

6 While we beneath our vines and fig-trees sit,
Or thus within thy sacred temple meet,

Accept, great God, the tribute of our song,
And all the mercies of this day prolong.
Then spread thy peaceful word through every nation,
That all the earth may hail thy great salvation.

CCCLXVIII. *The Blessing pronounced upon Israel by the Priests.* Numbers vi. 24—27.

FOR NEW YEAR'S-DAY.

1 GUARDIAN of Israel, source of peace,
Who hast ordain'd thy priests to bless,
Shine forth as our propitious Lord,
And verify thy servants' word.

2 Let thy own power defend us still
Through all the year from every ill;
And let the splendor of thy face
Cheer all its bright or gloomy days.

3 Thy countenance our souls would see,
For all our joys unite in thee;
And peace still waits at thy command
To calm our hearts, and bless our land.

4 Hear, while thy priests address their vows,
And scatter blessings through thy house;
And, while they fall, may Israel raise
Its pious songs of ardent praise.

CCCLXIX. *A Hymn for a Fast-Day in Time of War.* Deuteronomy xxiii. 9.

1 GREAT God of heaven and nature, rise,
And hear our loud united cries:
See Britain bow before thy face
Through all her coasts, and seek thy grace.

2 No arm of flesh we make our trust;
Nor sword, nor horse, nor ships we boast:
Thine is the land, and thine the main,
And human force and skill is vain.

3 Our guilt might draw thy vengeance down
On every shore, on every town;
But view us, Lord, with pitying eye,
And lay thy lifted thunder by.

4 Forgive the follies of our times,
And purge our land from all its crimes;
Reform'd and deck'd with grace divine,
Let princes, priests and people shine.

5 O may no God-provoking sin
Through all our camps and navies reign;

No foul reproach, to drive from thence
Our surest glory and defence.

6 So shall our God delight to bless,
And crown our arms with wide success:
Our foes shall dread Jehovah's sword,
And conquering Britain shout the Lord.

CCCLXX. *Jabez's Prayer recommended to Youth.* 1 Chronicles iv. 9, 10.

1 THOU God of Jabez, hear,
While we intreat thy grace,
And borrow that expressive prayer,
With which he sought thy face.

2 "O that the Lord indeed
"Would me his servant bless,
"From every evil shield my head,
"And crown my paths with peace!

3 "By his Almighty hand
"My helper and my guide,
"Till, with his saints in Canaan's land,
"My portion he divide."

4 Thus pious Jabez pray'd,
While God inclin'd his ear;
And all, by whom this suit is made,
Shall find the blessing near.

5 Ye youths, your vows combine,
With loud united voice;
So shall your heads with honour shine,
And all your hearts rejoice!

CCCLXXI. *Manasseh's Affliction, Penitence and Restoration.* 2 Chronicles xxxiii. 10—12.

1 GOD of Manasseh, wilt thou scorn
To own that humble name,
While sinners, so remote as we,
Thy grace to him proclaim?

2 High rais'd on Judah's throne he seem'd,
That hell in him might reign;
And taught thy sacred name to know
Its honours to profane.

3 Yet thou the royal wretch didst view
With pity in thine eyes:
How strange a cure thy mercy wrought!
How wondrous, yet how wise!

4 Caught in the thorns by hostile hands,
The captive learn'd to reign;
And Babel's fetters set him free
From Satan's heavier chain.

5 From the deep dungeon where he lay,
Thou heard'st his doleful cry;
Didst raise the suppliant from the dust,
And bring salvation nigh.

6 Our souls, deprav'd and hard like his,
May grace exert its power!
And they shall bless the wholesome smart,
That works the sovereign cure.

CCCLXXII. *A Church seeking Direction from God in the Choice of a Pastor.* Ezra viii. 21.

1 SHEPHERD of Israel, bend thine ear,
Thy servants' groans indulgent hear!
Perplex'd, distress'd, to thee we cry,
And seek the guidance of thine eye.

2 Thy comprehensive view surveys
Our wandering paths, our trackless ways;
Send forth, O Lord, thy truth and light,
To guide our doubtful footsteps right.

3 With longing eyes, behold, we wait
In suppliant crowds at mercy's gate:
Our drooping hearts, O God, sustain!
Shall Israel seek thy face in vain?

4 O Lord, in ways of peace return,
Nor let thy flock neglected mourn;
May our blest eyes a shepherd see,
Dear to our souls, and dear to thee!

5 Fed by his care, our tongues shall raise
A cheerful tribute to thy praise;
Our children learn the grateful song,
And theirs the cheerful notes prolong.

CCCLXXIII. *Divine Condemnation deprecated, and Instruction desired, by the Afflicted.* Job x. 2.

1 TREMENDOUS Judge, before thy bar,
What human creature can be clear?
An arm so strong, an eye so pure,
Who can escape, or who endure?

2 "Do not condemn us, Lord," we cry,
As trembling in the dust we lie;
But, while with grief our guilt we own,
Let smiling mercy take the throne.

3 If thou wilt smite, offended God,
Sheath up thy sword, and take thy rod,
And, 'midst the anguish and the smart,
Open to discipline our heart.

4 By chastening, if our souls be taught,
And cleans'd from every secret fault;
The wise severity we'll bless,
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CCCLXXIV. *Thanksgiving for National Deliverance, and Improvement of it.* Luke i. 74, 75.

1 SALVATION doth to God belong;
His power and grace shall be our song;
His hand hath dealt a secret blow,
And terror strikes the haughty foe.

2 Praise to the Lord, who bows his ear
Propitious to his people's prayer;
And, though deliverance long delay,
Answers in his well-chosen day.

3 "O! may thy grace our land engage,
"Rescu'd from fierce tyrannic rage,
"The tribute of its love to bring
"To thee, our Saviour, and our King!"

4 Our temples guarded from the flame,
Shall echo thy triumphant name;
And every peaceful private home
To thee a temple shall become.

5 Still be it our supreme delight
To walk as in thy honour'd sight:
Still in thy precepts and thy fear,
To life's last hour to persevere.

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